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THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

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Our favourite competition cars of all time from the Italian giant, starts p20

UK's top rallying series to break new ground with single-venue event on Cheshire parkland

BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP TO KICK OFF AT OULTON PARK

Oulton will host the BRC opener

By Luke Barry

The British Rally Championship will hold a round entirely within a racing circuit for the first time in its 63-year history with the Neil Howard Stages at Oulton Park becoming the new season-opener.

The Neil Howard is a staple of the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship calendar and will once again be a counting round of that series. The rally will take place on a Monday (May 31) and will offer eight stages, totalling 55 competitive miles.

The closest the BRC has come to a similar-style event was the MSA Rally in 2000 that was held on airfields and in the grounds of stately homes near Grantham.

MNCRC co-ordinator Darren Spann told MN: "Rallying needs to do this, not the MNCRC or BRC, but for rallying after the 12 months of turmoil we've had this is hugely positive news for the whole community."

Full story, page 10

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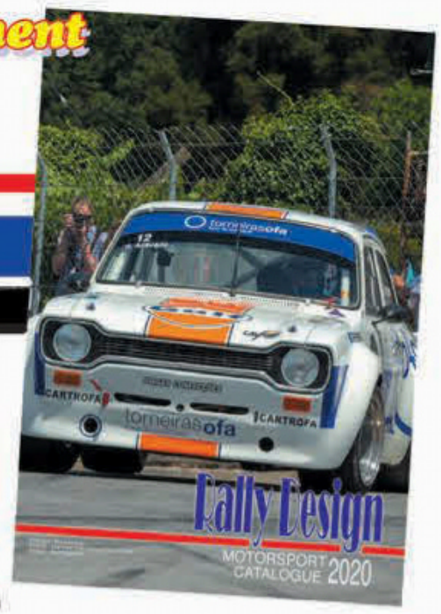

ATLAS AXLE PARTS, BLACKLINE

Atlas plate style diff, historic spec. with 'Boreham' mods, 18 tooth side gears £495.80 £594.96

SPARES		
Spare side gears, 18 tooth	each £32.50	£39.00
Motorsport plate kit	£83.90	£100.68
Wavy plate	each £16.30	£19.56
Atlas CWP, 3.4, 3.7, 4.6, 5.1	£251.80	£302.16

Atlas axle casing, thick tube, double pinned & breather	£198.60	£238.32
Pig's head only	£165.00	£198.00
Axle end stubs, R/H & L/H thread	pair £49.90	£59.88
Axle locking rings, R/H & L/H thread	pair £21.90	£26.28
Locking ring adjustment tool	£25.50	£30.60
Caliper mount brackets, suit AP	pair £29.50	£35.40

Fully floating hub assembly without shafts	pair £218.60	£262.32
Fully floating axle kit, inc.(2) F/F Hub assemblies plus (2) '4340' halfshafts,18 tooth (choice of length)	£328.60	£394.38
Flange to suit F/F hub kit	£49.50	£59.40
SPARES		
Studs	each5.90	£7.08
Seal pack	pack z£13.90	£16.68
Bearing, top quality	each £38.90	£46.68
770mm '4340' halfshaft, 18 tooth	each £77.50	£93.00
820mm '4340' halfshaft, 18 tooth	each £82.50	£99.00

All Blackline halfshafts Group 1 and Group 4 are manufactured from 4340 alloy steel and have induction hardened teeth to Rockwell 50 HRC specifications. 4340 is about twice as strong as 1040 (the material which OEM halfshafts are normally manufactured from). It has a high degree of ductility to absorb shock loadings of abrupt acceleration, taking some load off the differential and CWP. However, it has a very high yield strength to sustain high torque loads without failure. 4340 is the ideal halfshaft material.

266 x 21 'Forest' type discs	pair £159.00	£190.80
FBL 002 disc bells	pair £51.00	£61.20
Halfshaft flange, not F/F, suit std. axle	each £59.50	£71.40

ENGLISH AXLE PARTS, BLACKLINE

English plate style diff (30/90 ramps) Available 18 tooth (mates with semi-floating conversion kit)	£395.80	£474.96
Available 22 tooth (mates with std. halfshaft)	£395.80	£474.96
Spare plate kit	£39.50	£47.40
Spare side gears, 18 or 22 tooth (please state)	£32.50	£39.00
English CWP,3.54, 3.7, 3.9, 4.1, 4.4, 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.3	£231.50	£277.80
Spare side bearing, top quality	£19.90	£23.88
Crush washer	£5.90	£7.08
Crown wheel bearing	£9.90	£11.88
Pinion bearing	£14.90	£17.88
Atlas into English semi-floating hub kit, inc. (2) '4340' halfshafts, 18 tooth	£443.80	£532.56
English axle weld-on brace ring	£39.90	£47.88
Special 10mm axle brace, English axle	£99.50	£119.40
SPARES		
Semi-floating hub assembly (less bearing)	each £144.40	£173.28
Bearing '4340'	£48.90	£59.76
Halfshaft, suit semi-floating kit	£77.50	£93.00
Flange, not semi-floating, suit std. axle	£59.50	£71.40
Flange, Group 1 type	£59.50	£71.40
Brake disc, 265 x 10	each £34.50	£41.40

HELICAL LSDs, BLACKLINE

English axle, Caterham, 22 spline	£324.00	£388.80
Atlas axle, 16 spline	£354.00	£424.80
Ford FWD - Escort, Fiesta, Focus, KA, Orion, Puma (BC/1B5 trans)	£399.00	£478.80
Sierra 7", Caterham	£399.00	£478.80
Focus ST170, Mini Cooper 'S' (6-speed Getrag box)	£399.00	£478.80
Mazda MX5 (94-05)	£399.00	£478.80

TRANSMISSION PARTS, BLACKLINE

4-speed bearing type gearlever	£38.50	£46.20
5-speed bearing type gearlever	£40.50	£48.60
5-speed quickshift conversion kit	£13.50	£16.20
M10 ally 'Pro' gearknob	£14.90	£17.88
M10 white or black nylon gearknob	£12.50	£15.00
Propshaft, Type 9 - English or Atlas axle	£89.50	£107.40

ESCORT BRAKING PARTS

Wilwood brakes kit, 265x10, Powerlite caliper	£299.51	£359.41
Wilwood brakes kit, 247x20, Midilite caliper	£468.49	£562.19
Wilwood brakes kit, 285x21, Midilite caliper	£571.40	£685.68
Balance bar pedal box, cable clutch	£189.50	£227.40
Balance bar pedal box, hydraulic clutch	£215.00	£258.00
RMD master cylinders	from £21.50	£25.80
Wilwood master cylinders	from £29.50	£35.40
Wilwood proportioning valve, knob	£42.50	£51.00
Wilwood proprtioning valve, lever	£57.50	£69.00
Blackline 'swaged' stainless brake lines, 3-line	£29.74	£35.69
Classic Ford wheels 6x13	£69.00	£82.80
7x13	£76.00	£91.20
8x13	£87.50	£105.00
8x15	£99.00	£118.80

Poly' bump stops, top axle mounting	pair	£8.12	£9.75
Escort 11/1300 front springs, 145-220lbs	pair	£33.80	£40.56
Escort RS front springs, 145-220lbs	pair	£33.80	£40.56
1.9" & 2.25" coil springs, 20,000 in stock!		from £15.90	£19.08
Adjustable spring seat kit		£24.50	£29.40
Helper spring adaptor, 2.25"-2.25"		£10.50	£12.60
Gaz, adjustable front shocks	each	£67.60	£81.12
Gaz, adjustable (3-way) front shocks	each	£299.50	£359.40
Gaz, adjustable rate rear shocks	each	£65.00	£78.00
Quick steering racks	RH 2:9 ratio	£119.50	£143.40
	RH 2:4 ratio	£139.50	£167.40
	LH 2:4 ratio	£149.50	£179.40

H/duty quick steering racks	RH 2:4 ratio	£174.50	£209.40
	RH 2:2 ratio	£204.50	£245.40
	LH 2:4 ratio	£184.50	£225.40
	LH 2:2 ratio	£214.50	£257.40
OEM style steering rack mounts	pair	£16.80	£20.16
Roller bearing top mount - spherical bearing,	each	£49.50	£59.40
Roller bearing top mount - roller bearing,	each	£49.50	£59.40
Roller bearin plastic dust covers	pair	£9.50	£11.40
Spherical bearing race type top mounts	pair	£49.60	£59.52

TCA's 'Pattern' style	pair	£36.50	£43.80
TCA's 'OEM' style	pair	£63.50	£76.20
TCA bush insertion tool		£14.90	£17.88
Twin cam anti-roll bar		£59.50	£71.40
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World cup mounts	pair	£28.50	£34.20
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4-link kit		£119.50	£143.40
Heavy duty 4-link kit		£185.00	£222.00
Group 4 round turret kit	kit	£65.00	£78.00
Mk1 spring shackles	car set	£17.00	£20.40
Mk2 spring shackles	car set	£23.50	£28.20
OEM Escort RS struts	each	£96.95	£116.34
Group 4 spec. front RS struts	each	£128.00	£153.60
Escort RS stub axles	pair	£130.00	£156.00
RS steering arms	pair	£69.50	£83.40
Heavy duty steering arms, gusseted	pair	£79.50	£95.40
Quick fit steering arm kit	pair	£9.60	£11.52
Ally hubs - standard or Group 4	each	£49.50	£59.40
Stub axle hardware kit		£10.90	£13.08
Watts linkage kit		£199.50	£239.40
Taper leaf springs, 146lb rate	each	£49.50	£59.40
Ally tube strut brace, round tube		£44.90	£53.88
Work style 60mm oval tube strut brace		£51.50	£61.80
Rear lamp protectors	pair	£12.90	£15.48
Chassis mounted sump guard, wet sump		£137.00	£164.40
Kaylan mudflaps, 4mm (500x300)	pair	£16.50	£19.80
Body jacking kit	car set	£119.50	£143.40
Ford hub nut socket, 3/4"D, 65mm		£13.90	£16.68

Mk1 Mexico front wing, LH or RH	each	£265.22	£318.27
Mk2 front wing, LH or RH, std.	each	£72.10	£86.52
Mk2 front wing, LH or RH, RS2000	each	£175.00	£210.00

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X-Flow ally radiator £179.60 £215.52
RS2000 (Pinto) ally radiator £179.60 £215.52
13/235 oil cooler 50.10 £60.12

Lockable fuel filler cap assembly £49.50 £59.40

Silicone hose kit, Mexico or RS2000 (available blue, black or red) £62.34 £74.81

WCP interupter fuel pump		£29.00	£34.80
WCP solid state fuel pump		£19.00	£22.80
WCP injection fuel pump	from	£32.19	£38.63
Bonnet pin kits, stainless		£5.00	£6.00
Bonnet pin kits, alloy		£7.00	£8.40
Aerocatch	from	£31.00	£37.20
Avanti map light	from	£19.50	£23.40
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Roll cage padding, 3ft, B1 fire rating		£6.00	£7.20

M16 calipers to fit standard discs, pair £89.00 £106.80
M16 calipers to fit vented discs (no spacers needed), pair £98.50 £118.20
M16 caliper, shouldered bolts, set of 4 £10.99 £13.19
Group 1 vented discs (247x20, pair £39.00 £46.80

4.25 ltr FIA plumbed-in fire system, full installation kit, FIA homologation EX 037.13 Kit £159.80 £191.76

Escort Laminated & Heated Screens

Escort Mk1 front laminated screen (incl. rubber)	£69.50	£83.40
Escort Mk2 front laminated screen (incl. rubber)	£69.50	£83.40
Escort Mk1 Front heated laminated screen (inc. rubber)	£198.60	£238.32
Escort Mk2 Front heated laminated screen (inc. rubber)	£198.60	£238.32
Escort Mk1 front screen rubber	£24.92	£29.90
Escort Mk1 rear screen rubber	£23.92	£28.70
Escort Mk2 front screen rubber	£29.08	£34.90
Escort Mk2 rear screen rubber	£29.08	£34.90
Laser windscreen chip repair kit	£13.90	£16.68
14" or 17" rear view mirror	£14.90	£17.88

Escort Mk2 Rubber Parts

Bonnet bump stop	pair	£6.20	£7.44
Bonnet rail bump stop, set of 4		£10.90	£13.08
Bonnet bump stop, centre-rear		£5.10	£6.12
Wiring loom bulkhead grommet		£6.90	£8.28
Bonnet release cable grommet		£5.20	£6.24
Steering column bulkhead grommet		£7.20	£8.64
Handbrake backplate dust boots	pair	£7.10	£8.52
Spedo cable bulkhead grommet		£5.20	£6.24
Throttle pedal pad		£5.20	£6.24
Brake and clutch pedal pads	pair	£8.00	£9.60
Shock absorber top caps	pair	£13.90	£16.68
Rear bumper side plugs, set of 4		£9.90	£11.88
Oil line bulkhead grommet		£5.10	£6.12
Brake servo rod bellows		£5.20	£6.24

PLEASE NOTE: All prices in Red are EXCLUSIVE OF VAT

COMMENT

Photo: SMJ Photography, Jakob Ebrey, Motorsport Images

Gilles Villeneuve made the best of his Ferraris that weren't, necessarily, the finest

MAKING THE PULSE QUICKER

Ferrari. It is hard to find someone who doesn't have a soft spot for the cars in red. Enzo's team might not have always done things in the way they should be done, but there has never been any question that motorsport and the unrelenting quest for success has been at the core of everything it has done.

It has been painful to watch the Italian giant missing the bull's eye so often in recent seasons in Formula 1. It has the biggest budget, the biggest slice of the prize cake and has had some of the best talent behind the wheel. Its failures have been hard to swallow, and it will be determined to make sure that the SF21 fixes those problems when Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz take to the grid at Bahrain this weekend. In a year when Mercedes bosses are down-playing the team's chances in the early part of the campaign, it would be heart-warming to see the Scuderia make its mark.

While the SF21 didn't turn too many heads when the wraps came off two weeks ago, that hasn't been the case with all of the Maranello firm's designs. That has prompted us to put our collective brainpower together to come up with our list of top 10 favourite competition Ferraris. It is a very emotive subject and can depend on so many things. However, we have had a shot and our favourites are part of the countdown which starts on page 20 of this issue.

Elsewhere, we bring news of the British Rally Championship, which will have the opening round of 2021 at Oulton Park alongside the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship. It is a bold move, and provides validation for the work that the MN series bosses have put in. What is also does is give a secure environment for a top-flight national rally to return to the UK's landscape this year. That has to be good news all round.

Also in this issue, the incumbent of our readers' questions hot seat is Welshman Karl Jones. Like so many drivers, his is a story of a driver with bags of talent but without bags of cash. He tells us just how close he came to some golden opportunities, only to be thwarted by the bank manager.

Graham Keilloh takes a look at the innovative ERA championship, which will kick off initially in Belgium. It will provide another option for those who want an electrically-powered motorsport career, be they engineers or drivers.

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MOTORSPORT NEWS

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RACING NEWS

IN BRIEF

Fast Jeddah layout
The design of the new Jeddah circuit in Saudi Arabia, which is due to join the grand prix line-up this year, will make it one of the fastest on the calendar, according to Formula 1. The 3.84-mile configuration will be the second-longest on the roster and will feature 27 corners. Early simulations suggest the average speed will be 155mph. Formula 1 managing director Ross Brawn said: "The design brings out the best of a modern street circuit but also has fast-paced free-flowing areas that will create fast speeds and overtaking opportunities."

Sabine Schmitz dies
Saloon car racer and Nurburgring expert Sabine Schmitz passed away last week aged 51. She had been suffering from cancer. Schmitz, who formed the Frikadelli Racing team with her husband Klaus Abbelen, is the only woman to have outright claimed victory at the Nurburgring 24 Hours. She prevailed in 1996 and again in 1997, both times at the wheel of a BMW.

Fassler to step down
Three-time Le Mans winner Marcel Fassler has called time on his racing career. The Swiss driver, who took triumphs at Le Mans with Audi in 2011, 2012 and 2014, has competed in the classic French endurance race 14 times. His last race was in the 12 Hours of Sebring late last season, sharing a Corvette with Oliver Gavin and Tommy Milner. The 44-year-old, a former DTM driver, also finished second in class in 2007's Britcar 24 Hours at Silverstone in a Duller Motorsport BMW .

W Series in Wales
The Anglesey circuit in Wales will host the pre-season W Series test session after it was moved from its original venue of Circuit Ricardo Tormo in Spain. Continuing Covid restrictions in Spain meant the championship bosses have had to have a rethink. All drivers are now expected to attend the May 17-21 sessions. The opening round of the championship is due to take place supporting the French GP at Paul Ricard on June 25-26.

BTCC date tweak
The British Touring Car Championship calendar has been tweaked for 2021 in an effort to allow more spectators to attend once lockdown restrictions have been lifted. The opening race weekend at Thruxton on May 8-9 remains and will take place behind closed doors. The second meeting will be at Snetterton on June 12-13, followed two weeks later by Brands Hatch Indy on June 26-27. The remainder of the schedule is unaffected.

MERCEDES EXPECTS A FIGHT TO MAINTAIN FORMULA 1 DOMINANCE IN BAHRAIN

Title-winning team is nervous ahead of the opening grand prix in the Middle East on Sunday

Photos: Motorsport Images, Jakob Ebrey

Drivers Hamilton (above) and Bottas have struggled

By Matt James

Mercedes F1 boffins have said that they expect to be on the back foot at the opening grand prix of the season in Bahrain this weekend.

Lewis Hamilton was fifth quickest and team-mate Valtteri Bottas was ninth after the three-day pre-season test at the Sakhir circuit recently. They were both outpaced by Max Verstappen's Red Bull-Honda.

While the Dutchman is circumspect on the Honda-powered team's chances *(see MN, March 18)*, insiders at Mercedes think that its rival team has the best hopes going into the opening races.

Mercedes has introduced a new design philosophy around the rear of the W12 chassis, but both Hamilton and Bottas declared that it has made the machine twitchy and unstable.

Mercedes strategy director James Vowles said: "There are a lot of unknowns. No-one up and down the paddock can pinpoint exactly where they are. Are we going to have a close season? I would say so.

"Red Bull are a fierce adversary, they've got a strong package and clearly came out of the box very, very quick. I don't believe we are going into this particularly finding all the performance that is missing or being ahead of them."

Vowles admitted that the drivers' issues with the unstable machine are unlikely to be cured over the opening rounds of the season.

"The car was handling poorly and conversely the Red Bull in fact looked what we would call planted, but it was a very stable car especially through the last sector of the lap," he added. "It was visible to the outside and I would say the lap times mirrored that as well."

Mercedes is gunning for its eighth consecutive constructors' title this term, while Hamilton is on the cusp of making history with an eighth drivers' trophy.

ROWBOTTOM TO PARTNER SHEDDEN IN TEAM DYNAMICS 2021 ASSAULT

Daniel Rowbottom will line up alongside Gordon Shedden for the restructured Team Dynamics operation in this year's British Touring Car Championship.

The team has forged a multi-year alliance with backers Halfords and Cataclean, which sponsors Rowbottom, as Honda has pulled out its works support and team owner Matt Neal steps aside from the BTCC driving seat *(see separate stories)*.

Former Renault Clio UK Cup racer Rowbottom made his debut in the BTCC in 2019 at the wheel of a Ciceley Motorsport Mercedes and was in the points on four occasions. The Kidderminster racer took a sabbatical from racing in 2020 but is eager to get to grips with his new car.

Rowbottom, 32, said: "For me, this an absolute dream come true. This is a great opportunity for me with a top-flight team. I've been studying the data and it looks fast on paper and has been proven to be fast on track, so I'm really excited to finally go testing next month."

Team Dynamics team manager James Rodgers said the renewed deal with the two sponsors would enable the Droitwich concern to look ahead.

"This is a great partnership for us," said Rodgers. "In these uncertain times, to get a multi-year deal, means we can continue to invest and develop in our BTCC programme.

"Both drivers are highly motivated, and we hope for great things in 2021."

Rowbottom will get his hands on the Honda Civic

Neal: mentor

THREE-TIME CHAMP NEAL TO STEP DOWN FROM BTCC HOT SEAT

Matt Neal will take a sabbatical from the cockpit of a British Touring Car Championship machine this season, ending an unbroken run of appearances in the category that stretches back to 1991.

Since his debut in the Formula 1-support race at Silverstone in 1991, Neal has contested at least one race per season every year since. The 54-year-old, now co-owner of the Team Dynamics squad, has taken three drivers' titles.

Now, with Gordon Shedden and Daniel Rowbottom in the cockpits of the two FK8-spec Honda Civic Type R machines, Neal will oversee Rowbottom's maiden year with the team and continue to work alongside backer Halfords.

Neal's last BTCC win was in the special 60th anniversary race at Snetterton in 2018. He finished 11th in the standings in 2020.

He has confirmed that he has not hung up his helmet but is just stepping away from the BTCC cockpit.

Neal said: "I will still be representing Halfords as a brand ambassador and acting as a mentor, both on and off track, for both drivers. We have been working hard over the winter to pull a package together that will still see us contending at the sharp end of the grid and ultimately achieve our goals and aspirations, which is winning titles! I'm really excited for the coming season."

HONDA BOWS OUT OF WORKS COMMITMENT AFTER 17 YEARS

Bosses at Honda UK have said they have ended the partnership with Team Dynamics in the British Touring Car Championship after an 11-year association with the squad and has "significant regret" over the end of the partnership.

Honda has been allied with Team Dynamics as an official factory operation since 2010 and the Droitwich operation has run the Japanese cars since 2004. Since the beginning of the relationship, drivers Matt Neal and Gordon Shedden have taken three drivers' titles apiece. Dynamics has also claimed 14 manufacturer and teams' titles with Honda.

Olivia Dunn, head of communications at Honda UK, said: "As a business, we continually review our marketing. Therefore, it was with significant regret that we had to inform Team Dynamics that we were unable to continue."

Team owner Neal, who has raced six different types of Honda in the BTCC, said he was sad the see the partnership end. He said: "We have been the most successful team in Honda's history of touring car championships, which we are incredibly proud of."

Honda signed on as a works team back in 2010

NEW LOOK FOR BTCC BMW

The BMW-backed WSR team has taken the wraps off its new colour scheme for the 2021 British Touring Car Championship season. The trio of rear-wheel-drive BMW 330i M Sports will be handled by four-time title winner Colin Turkington, remaining driver Tom Oliphant and WSR returnee Stephen Jelley.

HAMILTON TO REJOIN TEAM HARD FOR CUPRA TOURING CAR ATTACK

Nic Hamilton has completed the British Touring Car Championship line-up by signing to return to the grid with Team Hard in its new Cupra Leon for 2021.

The 28-year-old, who has started 56 races in three BTCC campaigns in 2015, 2019 and 2020, has rounded out the Kent squad's four-car team. He will race alongside Jack Goff, Aron Taylor-Smith and Glynn Geddie.

Hamilton, the half-brother of F1 World champion Lewis, scored his first points in the category last term at the wheel of Team Hard's VW CC at Brands Hatch.

Hamilton said: "Team Hard has made a huge decision to invest in the new car and I'm thankful for its decision to welcome me into the fold again. I really believe we can achieve some great results and memorable moments."

Hamilton is back with a Cupra

Photo: Jakob Ebrey, Porsche GB, Darren Cook Scruffy Bear

Boss Christian Dick is seeking "GT stars of the future"

Project worked on for months

SPEEDWORKS AND TOYOTA SEEK FUTURE BRITISH GT STARS WITH NEW YOUNG DRIVER PROGRAMME

Frontrunner with Toyota Gazoo Racing offers "golden opportunity" for aspiring GT racing talent

By Graham Keilloh

Speedworks Motorsport alongside Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe (TGR-E) is looking to develop future stars of the British GT championship with the new Toyota Gazoo Racing UK Young Driver Programme.

Speedworks is a well-established British Touring Car Championship frontrunner racing Toyotas and last year, under the Toyota Gazoo Racing UK banner, won three races with a Tom Ingram-driven Corolla. The Cheshire-based team also, with TGR-E engineering support, in 2020 introduced the GR Supra GT4 to British GT and was consistently competitive.

The young driver programme is open to those aged 25 and under with a GT racing background. In addition to benefitting from Speedworks and TGR-E's experience and expertise, recipients will enjoy TGR-E's state-of-the-art Cologne facility and driving simulator plus will access the experience of Toyota racing stars such as reigning World Endurance Championship winner Mike Conway. The first programme member plus Speedworks' 2021 British GT line-up will be revealed soon.

Speedworks boss Christian Dick said: "[It is] an exciting project that we have been working on for several months now. We believe this new initiative can genuinely help to discover and develop British GT stars of the future.

"We have spent a lot of time evaluating potential drivers to become the first member of the programme, taking into account not only their pace and performance inside the cockpit but just as importantly their work ethic, attitude and media skills away from the car to ensure we make the right choice. This is a golden opportunity for initially one young driver – and, moving forward, hopefully more."

Caygill had to wait 12 months to make Porsche debut

EX-BTCC CAYGILL JOINS CAMMISH IN REDLINE'S CARRERA CUP GB LINE-UP

Former British Touring Car Championship racer Josh Caygill will compete for Team Redline Racing in this year's Porsche Carrera Cup GB, making his delayed debut in the championship.

Caygill joins BTCC title contender and two-time Carrera Cup GB champion Dan Cammish in Redline's line-up. Caygill, 31, had planned to make his Porsche bow in Carrera Cup last year with multiple champion Redline, but had to sit the season out due to Covid's disruption.

Caygill raced in two late-season BTCC meetings in 2018 in an AmD MG. He started out in motorcycle competition and also has Blancpain and Nurburgring Nordschleife-based VLN Series experience.

Caygill said: "The team gave me a great learning environment last year to get to grips with the Porsche. It's an awesome car to drive, unlike anything I've raced before. I haven't raced full-time in the UK for a few years now. I'm looking forward to getting stuck into the action."

Redline managing director Simon Leonard added: "He impressed us with how quickly he got to grips with the Porsche during his initial tests with us. He's ready to make up for lost time now."

BRIT RISING STAR FOSTER PLOTS INDY FUTURE

Multiple British Formula 3 and Formula 4 race-winner Louis Foster will move Stateside later this year seeking to race in US single-seaters from 2022 and eventually race in IndyCar.

Foster will compete in Euroformula Open this year with reigning champion CryptoTower Racing Team backed by Motopark, having with Double R won on his category debut weekend late last season. And he told Motorsport News his next planned move is to American single-seaters and ultimately to IndyCar.

Foster told MN: "I'm looking to go and do IndyCar, hence why I'm moving over to the States at the end of this year, I'm going to a college out there, and then hopefully this time next year we shall be signing a deal in some kind of American single-seater series whether that be Indy Lights, Formula Regional Americas or Indy Pro 2000, one of those three [is] most likely.

"IndyCar, it's a more realistic career ambition for myself to have over something like Formula 1. The initial reason [for moving to the US] was IndyCar. I still care a lot about my education, and I realised that I could also study out there, it would give me something to work on outside of racing."

It's Euroformula for Foster this year then US move

British F4 star Alvarez at last gets his British F3 switch

ALVAREZ GETS BELATED BRITISH F3 MOVE WITH HITECH

British Formula 4 title-contender Sebastian Alvarez will make a belated BRDC British Formula 3 championship step-up this year with Hitech GP.

The Mexican in 2019 took five British F4 race wins on the way to runner-up in the standings with the Double R team. He was set to move to British F3 last year, remaining with Double R, but Covid disruption scuppered his plans.

With Double R not racing in British F3 this year Alvarez joins Hitech, which made its category debut last year and took Kush Maini to second in the table.

Alvarez has tested with the team and will join the already announced Australian Bart Horsten in its line-up alongside a third driver to be announced.

Alvarez said: "I cannot wait to get going after a year out. I am looking forward to getting to know everyone in the team and working together to achieve great results. Hitech is a great team with lots of experience."

VETERAN FALVEY RETURNS TO TEAM BRIT AS COACH

Professional racing driver and former commando Jamie Falvey is returning to his Team Brit roots as its new driver coach.

The all-disabled team supports people with physical and psychological challenges in accessing motorsport, and has a six-driver Britcar 2021 line-up.

Falvey served in the Commandos from 2010 to '16, rising to Lance Corporal, before being medically discharged after sustaining permanent hearing damage and tinnitus.

He joined Team Brit in 2017 and subsequently raced in Caterhams and Ginettas, taking several podium finishes. He now, as a qualified ARDS instructor, is developing his coaching career and will support Team Brit's head coach Max Coates.

Falvey said: "There is some real talent in the team this year and I'm looking forward to seeing what they can produce on track."

Falvey: back with Team Brit

OBITUARY

Peter Browning
1936-2021

Motorsport News was sad to learn of the passing of Peter Browning at the age of 84 after a short illness.

Browning ran the British Motor Corporation's competitions department and was integral in works Mini rallying. Then as British Racing and Sports Car Club executive director he was key in developing major events including the Formula Ford Festival when it began in 1972, and clerked for several high-profile races.

In the late 1980s and early '90s Browning was responsible for Marlboro's UK motorsport sponsorships and more recently was MG Car Club's competitions secretary.

MN passes its condolences to Browning's family and friends.

MULLER'S WTCR SWEET 16

Tin-top legend Yvan Muller has secured his 16th World Touring Car season after being included in Cyan Racing's four-strong team of factory-backed Lynk & Co 03 TCRs.

Frenchman Muller, the 2003 British Touring Car Championship victor and winner of four World Touring Car titles, will join nephew Yann Ehrlacher – who won the 2020 World Touring Car Cup – plus Swede Thed Bjork and Uruguayan Santiago Urrutia.

"Anyone who knows me knows that I am only here to win," said 51-year-old Muller, last year's WTCR runner-up. "I will start my 16th World Touring Car season this year and I am as motivated as when I drove my first in 2006."

The fourth WTCR season begins with two races on the Nurburgring Nordschleife in Germany from June 3-5.

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RACING NEWS

Photo: Jakob Ebrey, Gary Paravani (Xynamic)

Foster set for track return

Foster is excited by technical improvements to Firman

FF1600 LEGEND JOEY FOSTER SET FOR 2021 RETURN

Festival and Hayes winner poised for full 2021 National campaign after missing most of last two years

By Graham Keilloh

Formula Ford legend Joey Foster is set to return to full-time FF1600 competition this year and is aiming to fight for the National championship in his revised Don Hardman Racing Firman.

Multiple Festival and Walter Hayes Trophy winner Foster only competed in a single 2020 meeting due to Covid's disruption, having only raced in four 2019 meetings because of time and budget.

Foster told Motorsport News: "We want to do as many [2021] National rounds as possible. Ideally 100%, but Knockhill's a long way away! We'd love to get in there and have a championship fight. I'll [also] do everything to be there [at the Festival and Walter Hayes]."

Foster switched to the Firman in late 2018 and is excited about the developments made to it. "Those two [races in 2020] helped us confirm what we were already thinking. We were fast anyway, we can make things even better. The changes will make the car easier to set up and to adapt to in changing conditions. Just areas on the suspension [have been changed]."

The team has also acquired a second Firman. "We've had [it] set up identically," Foster added. "The idea is to get a quick second driver in. If things go to plan [at the season start] we'll start putting the feelers out."

Smith to "keep fighting spirit"

FESTIVAL WINNER SMITH HOPES FOR FF1600 OUTINGS IN 2021

Reigning Formula Ford Festival winner Rory Smith hopes to still make FF1600 appearances in 2021 following his switch to the Historic Sports Car Club's new Geoff Lees Trophy.

Smith triumphed in the Brands Hatch FF1600 showpiece late last year driving a B-M Racing Medina. Early this year he confirmed he'll compete in HSCC's new 1980s single-seater category racing a Formula Atlantic Ralt RT4.

Smith told Motorsport News: "In Geoff Lees there's only five meetings, so the plan is to do again a handful of Formula Ford races. The racing is so close, [there's] nothing like it out there for that sort of money, it's really good for honing racecraft. There isn't anywhere better. [I'll] do the odd race to keep my fighting spirit ticking over!

"I'll definitely look towards doing the big events at the end of the year [Festival and Walter Hayes Trophy]. I'm not totally sure which [races] we're doing but we'll be doing bits and bobs. We're far more likely to do some National [championship] races than the Heritage or whatever."

CLASSIC STAR TINKLER SWITCHES TO MODERN RAY

Classic Formula Ford frontrunner Ben Tinkler is switching to modern FF1600 equipment this year for the end-of-year Festival and Walter Hayes Trophy plus selected Northern championship and other races.

He will compete in a Don Hardman Racing Ray formerly driven by Joey Foster. Tinkler told Motorsport News: "We're going to try and tailor the calendar towards the Festival and Walter Hayes. We're going to pick and choose meetings throughout to learn the car and hopefully get up to speed. So it might not be a full Northern calendar, it might be a bit of a mixture.

"I've been speaking to Don on and off since about 2016 about teaming up and driving one of his cars. Now's as good a time as ever. Modern cars has always been something in the background I've wanted to have a go in.

"We might do some Northern and we might do some James Beckett meetings. I started out doing Northern stuff and it's a good friendly place to run and Diz [Ian Smith, Northern FF1600 coordinator] does a good job, same with James."

Classic battler Tinkler focusing on end-of-year events

IN BRIEF

Knockhill added

The British Racing and Sports Car Club has added a National Formula Ford 1600 championship round at Knockhill, following the loss of Snetterton's April meeting. The Fife round will have two races on June 6 and testing the day before. The prestigious David Leslie Trophy will be awarded to race two's winner. BRSCC chairman Peter Daly said: "Throughout these difficult times it is great to have support from all corners of the UK."

Walker makes move

Alex Walker will compete with Kevin Mills Racing in this year's National Formula Ford 1600 championship plus in other races during the year. The former British Formula 4 racer drove for Phil Wills' PWR1 outfit in FF1600 last year. Kevin Mills took Neil Maclennan to 2020's National crown.

Queen in at LDR

Sixteen-year-old American Colin Queen will race for Low Dempsey Racing this season in the National Formula Ford championship plus other select events. Karting graduate Queen makes his car racing debut and joins fellow US teenager Max Esterson at LDR. Queen said: "I always want to compete against the best in the top series for the category."

FENDER TAKES ESPORTS OPENER AFTER BALDWIN PENALTY

A race-long fight between James Baldwin and Angus Fender was the main focus of the British GT esports championship opening round at Oulton Park last weekend, with Fender winning after Baldwin copped a 30-second post-race penalty.

From pole, Fender in a Century Motorsport BMW M6 led to Old Hall only for esports star Baldwin's Team Rocket RJN McLaren 720S to bravely power around the outside to grab the lead.

Fender though quickly capitalised on a mistake by Baldwin at Hislop's to stride back ahead exiting Knickerbrook.

As dubious driving standards were prevalent behind, the leaders streaked clear with Fender ahead.

Fender then picked up a slow puncture in his post-pitstop stint; Baldwin caught and blasted by in a bold move charging up Clay Hill, but Fender fought back and the pair swapped paint braking for Hislop's.

Fender was grazed by the McLaren, slid wildly across the grass and was snagged by Baldwin who then pulled clear to win. 'Foul', said the race director who gave Baldwin the penalty in lieu of a drivethrough.

"It was a great race," said Fender, "and I don't think what [Baldwin] did was malicious."

Baldwin was gracious in defeat as the news was broken, while Jody Fannin's JMW Motorsport Ferrari 488 was third, benefitting from the carnage and a shrewd early stop.

Jack McIntyre led the first half of the GT4 race but lost two seconds in his pitstop allowing Zansho Rocket Simsport Porsche 718 Cayman team-mate Luka Berg to take the win despite damage incurred at the first corner.

David Addison

RESULTS

1 Angus Fender (BMW M6 GT3) 1h00m.25.835s; 2 James Baldwin (McLaren 720s GT3) +22.292s; 3 Jody Fannin (Ferrari 488 GT3); 4 Ben Green (BMW M6 GT3); 5 Sam Neary (Mercedes-AMG GT3); 6 Morgan Short (McLaren 720S GT3); 8 Tom Canning (Aston Martin Vantage GT3); 9 Bobby Trundley (Aston Martin Vantage GT3); 10 Jonny Adam (Aston Martin Vantage GT3). Class winners: Fender and Luka Berk (Porsche 718 Cayman GT4). **Fastest lap:** Fender 1m33.228s.

Fender (9) and Baldwin (23) had a race-long fight

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RALLY NEWS

CROATIA RALLY BOSSES HOPEFUL FANS WILL BE ALLOWED ON WRC DEBUT

Organisers of next month's Croatia Rally are planning to allow spectator access.

They have also announced plans for a superspecial in the capital Zagreb, which is set to host the World Rally Championship for the first time from April 22-25.

And it will be a superspecial with a difference with part of the route running through a giant exhibition hall located at the city's showground, which has hosted European championship events in the past.

"We chose the stages carefully to avoid [big] crowds, but also to enable the audience to be there and enjoy the attractive race," said Daniel Saskin, an ex-driver and the head of the event organising committee.

Croatian ASN president Davorin Stetner added: "We hope that the [pandemic] situation at the end of April will allow spectators to be there."

All three legs will be based to the west of Zagreb in the areas of Samoborsko Gorje (Friday April 23), Karlovac (Saturday April 24) and Medvednica and Kumrovec on Sunday April 25. The route is set to feature 22 Tarmac stages over a competitive distance of 187.50 miles.

A strong entry is expected with a large number of crews from eastern Europe set to take part. The event will also mark Adrien Fourmaux's first WRC event in a World Rally Car, while Irishman Craig Breen has been linked to a second 2021 start for Hyundai's factory team.

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Loeb (left) and Elena have now parted ways for the future

LOEB AND CO-DRIVER ELENA PART WAYS FOLLOWING DISASTER ON THE DAKAR RALLY

Enduring and successful rallying partnership comes to an end amid recriminations

By Graham Lister

Sebastien Loeb's famous partnership with Daniel Elena is over after the Frenchman's co-driver of 23 years was ditched at the behest of the Prodrive-run Bahrain Raid Xtreme team.

It follows navigational errors made by the 48-year-old Monegasque on January's Dakar Rally in Saudi Arabia, which BRX was contesting for the first time.

Loeb, who claimed 79 WRC wins and nine World titles with Elena, wrote on social media: "After discussions with the team, we came to the conclusion that maybe it would be good to try something else. It wasn't an easy decision or the easiest call to make after 23 years."

Elena reacted to the news by releasing a video in which he labelled Prodrive's Dakar bid as "shit".

"Before we say that Elena is bad, [Prodrive] made an onion," Elena said of the BRX Hunter. "Your car isn't made to win. I spent hours on the dos and don'ts in order to make a car strong. But, when we arrived, you didn't listen to the advice, either from me, but also from [team-mate] Nani [Roma] or Seb. You did what you wanted. This is normal, this is your philosophy. The last thing you won in the WRC was 2003 with Petter Solberg. Loeb and Elena have since arrived.

"Yes, I made a few navigation errors this year, but everyone did."

Speaking to the American DirtFish website, Prodrive head David Richards said: "We consulted with Sebastien. Obviously a decision of this nature is not something to be taken lightly, but you have to look at things objectively and take tough decisions.

"Dakar is unique now – the whole thing has changed in the last few years. It's not the event it was in Africa or in South America, it's quite unique in terms of the navigation challenge – it takes a lot of experience and a lot of practice."

While Loeb and Elena retired from the Dakar with a double puncture, Nani Roma and Alexandre Winocq finished fifth in the sister BRX Hunter, prompting Richards to say at the time: "No team has come to Dakar and achieved such a high result on their first attempt. Over the years, Prodrive has created great teams who have gone on to achieve incredible results. I'm certain the BRX team will do just that."

Elena and Loeb, who began competing together in 1998, have said separately that they will remain good friends following their split.

Kristensson has impressed with his pace in Junior series

SWEDE KRISTENSSON TO GRAB M-SPORT R5 OPPORTUNITY FOR 2021

M-Sport has added Tom Kristensson to its young driver roster and handed the Swede a WRC2 season in a Ford Fiesta R5 MkII.

Kristensson won the car as his prize for becoming last season's Junior World champion. But the 29-year-old's award has been significantly enhanced with a six-round programme as part of the M-Sport Ford World Rally Team.

M-Sport's Malcolm Wilson said: "Over the past two years he's had the benefit of some fantastic tuition from Maciej Woda and his team at M-Sport Poland. And now, it's time for him to develop those skills further – joining Richard Millener and our technical team at the highest level of world rallying.

"Fully integrated into the team, he'll have access to the same information as our lead drivers, and learn how to decipher this and enhance his skills alongside our experienced team of engineers."

Kristensson, an ERC3 Junior graduate, will make his WRC2 debut on the Croatia Rally from April 22-25.

He said: "I've not competed in a four-wheel-drive car before, [so] the first thing will be to get a feeling for it and to discover which settings are best. There's a lot to learn, but I'm in the best possible place to do that."

SET-UP DRAMAS THWARTED EVANS ON THE ARCTIC RALLY, SAYS LATVALA

Warmer-than-expected temperatures on Arctic Rally Finland last month cost Toyota's factory team a second consecutive 2021 WRC victory and Elfyn Evans a shot at winning two winter events on the bounce.

That's according to team principal Jari-Matti Latvala, who admitted his squad was caught out by testing in ambient temperatures approaching minus 20 degrees centigrade while ambient temperatures during the event were closer to zero.

"I think we were a little bit on the unlucky side," Latvala told WRC.com. "Hyundai was doing this rally [in Estonia] in the week before Rovaniemi and I think the temperature for them was a little bit more similar to Arctic Rally Finland.

The was Arctic snow for Elfyn Evans, but just not enough...

"We looked and this is where the mistake was coming. The car needs a different set-up for the very, very icy conditions – and when you have nearer to zero temperatures then the stud is going through the ice easily, biting in and giving good grip. This wasn't where our set-up was."

Despite Sebastien Ogier and Evans both struggling for top form on the Rovaniemi-based event, Kalle Rovanpera finished a career-best second to move to the top of the championship standings. "We have to be thankful to Kalle," Latvala added.

WRC CHIEFS CONFIDENT ON FULL ROSTER OF EVENTS THIS YEAR

The FIA will do all it can to maintain the planned 12-round World Rally Championship calendar despite the continued threat of Covid-19.

After last year's schedule slipped to a record-low seven events, Yves Matton, the FIA rally director, has said he is "confident" that 12 rounds will be achieved in 2021.

"I am confident we will have a 12-event calendar in WRC this year because we organised the calendar in the way that we have some spare events and arrangements are in place to achieve a full calendar," Matton said. "I think the vaccine will allow, step by step, fans to watch live. But the vaccine is in addition to what we have already put in place with Appendix S [the FIA's Covid code of conduct], which provides a very good base to work closely with the governments and the local ministries to allow events to run."

The system of "spare events", which Matton refers to, has already proved effective with the Ypres Rally called up to replace the cancelled Rally Northern Ireland.

Although Arctic Rally Finland wasn't originally listed as a back-up event, it was added to the calendar in place of the axed Rally Sweden at short notice.

The 2021 season started in Monte Carlo in January

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RALLY NEWS

IN THE SERVICE PARK
GEORGE LEPLEY

George Lepley recently got behind the wheel of his Lancer Mitsubishi E10 for a promotional day, and MN caught up with him to see how things are shaping up for 2021

Lepley: at the wheel

How was it being back in the car?
"I hadn't been in the car since Goodwood Speedweek five months ago and that was seven months after my last rally, the Malcolm Wilson Rally. So yes, it was nice to get back out and have a bit of a skid around but, of course, rallying is totally different to a promotional day but it's a step in the right direction that we're working to now with the return to rallying in sight."

For a youngster, has it been frustrating to effectively lose a year of your driving career?
"There's a bigger picture where people have lost lives and businesses have gone bankrupt so my driving career has to be put into context. I suppose the frustration though is that I felt like my snowball was just growing and growing and growing with 2018 as front-wheel-drive champions, 2019 rear-wheel-drive champions, 2020 four-wheel drive with the Group N+ car and WD40 coming onboard only for Covid to stop play. But nobody's benefited, it's not like I've stopped and everybody else has kept on rallying. Ultimately it's probably made me more eager to succeed."

Is the BTRDA the plan again this year?
"The first gravel round back could be Kielder [Forest Rally] so fingers crossed that goes ahead as the first round of the BTRDA. BTRDA is the goal but we're looking at other options as well as I need more experience of varied events. The potential is there to do well but I mustn't forget I've only done three rallies in a four-wheel-drive car and need to get more out of myself before I can move on."

BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP ADDS OULTON PARK TO ITS 2021 SCHEDULE

The British Rally Championship will hold a round at a circuit for the first time in its 63-year history

Photos: SMJ Photography, Jakob Ebrey

Oulton Park will now kick off British Rally Championship

By Luke Barry

The 2021 British Rally Championship will now be a seven-round season with the Neil Howard Stages at Oulton Park becoming the new season-opener on May 31.

Last week, championship organisers had unveiled an updated series schedule with the Ulster Rally joining the Nicky Grist Stages, Grampian Forest Rally, Trackrod Rally Yorkshire, Mull Rally and Cambrian Rally.

The addition of the Neil Howard Stages brings the start of the season forward by six weeks and levels the split between gravel and asphalt rounds as a third Tarmac option. The best five scores from seven rounds will count towards a competitors' final points tally.

While it is a first for the BRC to be held entirely within the confines of a race circuit, it's not new for rallying with a stage at Oulton Park kicking off Wales Rally GB in 2019.

CALENDAR

2021 British Rally Championship

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
May 31	Neil Howard Stages	Oulton Park, England
July 10	Nicky Grist Stages	Builth Wells, Wales
Aug 14	Grampian Forest Rally	Banchory, Scotland
Sep 24-25	Trackrod Rally Yorkshire	Scarborough, England
Oct 8-9	Mull Rally	Tobermory, Scotland
Oct 30	Cambrian Rally	Llandudno, Wales
Nov 19-20	Ulster Rally	Newry, Northern Ireland

British Rally Championship manager Iain Campbell told MN: "We all want to get back out rallying as soon as possible and the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship is offering probably the first opportunity that we will have to get back on the stages. Our competitors are all saying 'we just want to get back behind the wheel, we want to get out, we want to get the cars rolling'.

"While we have some detractors that may say 'that's not a proper British Rally Championship round', there are absolutely fantastic positives for being at a single venue and it's a great way of getting the camaraderie together as we won't have seen each other for 18 months by the time the event runs.

"And Oulton Park, as we've seen from when we were there with Rally GB, is not an easy place to have a rally stage either so I think the competition will be good."

The Neil Howard Stages will be the second round of the 2020-21 MNCRC season that kicked off in December with the Dukeries Rally at Donington Park. The event could potentially be the first championship rally to run in 2021.

Q&A DARREN SPANN

MN chats to the MNCRC co-ordinator and Neil Howard Stages clerk of the course.

How has this come about, what are the benefits to both championships?
"It's a late deal that we've all been working on and it's really, really positive. Rallying needs to do this, not the MNCRC or BRC, but for rallying after the 12 months of turmoil we've had this is hugely positive news for the whole community. Circuits may not be rallying heartland and may not be the heartland of the BRC but it certainly gets a really high-quality event on the calendar with mega mileage."

What does it mean for the MNCRC competitors?
"It won't affect them at all, if anything it will actually help them. We normally run nine stages at Oulton Park in November and the last stage is done as a one-lap blast around the circuit in the dark. Obviously with the time of year we're running the event that's not going to be applicable, so we've cut those last two miles which allows me to bring more competitors into the event to accommodate the BRC and most of the people that are on the current reserve list."

And how are things looking for the rest of the season?
"We will have to have a reduced-length calendar, we will not be able to get eight rounds in, but that was kind of inevitable once lockdown progressed into March. But we have secured dates for two rounds at Anglesey on July 3-4 making it a double header and we are still working closely with MotorSport Vision at this time to obtain some more rounds."

FIRST BRITISH RALLY WEBINAR PROVES A HUGE SUCCESS

British Rally Championship organisers held their first-ever webinar last week where they launched the upcoming season and had the opportunity to answer questions from the public.

BRC media manager Matt Cotton told MN the "idea was to humanise the BRC" and to try and facilitate an open discussion with stakeholders. "Opinions are important," he said. "We want to listen to people, we don't have all the answers.

"We believe in the British Rally Championship 110%, but we do understand that there are areas that need addressing and if we can all get together for one common goal and make it happen, I'm all for it anyway. I think initially the idea was as a one-off but now we've done it I would like to see us do it again."

There were also two announcements revolving around media coverage and the Junior BRC. The JBRC will be open to all R2 and Rally4 machines for 2021 – having switched to a one-make cup for Fiestas in 2020 – with a prize bundle soon to be confirmed, while 4Season Collective will produce the video coverage. Short clips will be uploaded at the end of each day's action with a full review show broadcasting midway through the following week.

"What they lack in experience in rallies they make up for with good storytelling and that really appealed to us," Cotton added.

"We hope that will appeal to a new audience as well as the competitors."

The BRC: under the spotlight

Rally North Wales bosses have been forced to look to '22

JUNE'S RALLY NORTH WALES CANCELLED FOR 2021

The planned round of the Welsh Rally Championship Rally North Wales has been cancelled with the organisers electing to be "prudent" to the local community.

Rally North Wales, based in Dolgellau, had already been postponed from its original March date to June 26 but, following the latest advice from the Welsh Government, will not happen at all in 2021.

A provisional 2022 date of March 26 has been set.

Rally manager Eifion Jones said: "We cannot hope to run such a large event as this without the support and goodwill of the local community: residents, businesses, authorities, emergency services and the general public.

"We feel it prudent for the health and wellbeing of everyone at this time, and for the continued good name and future local support of the event, that we had no choice, but to turn our attention to 2022."

NEW SKODA RALLY2 EVO TO CELEBRATE FIRM'S HISTORY

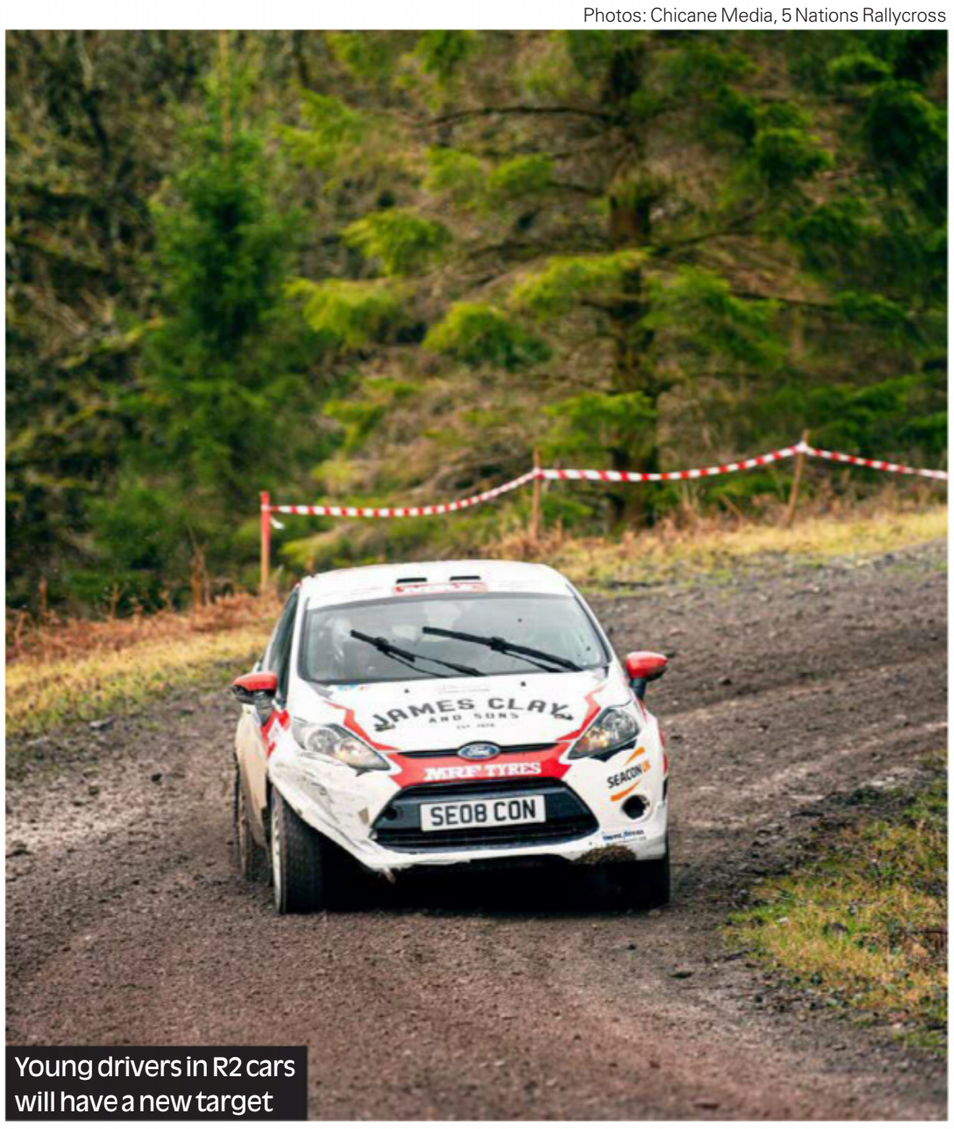
Skoda has marked its 120th anniversary in motorsport by releasing a limited-edition Fabia Rally2 Evo.

According to the Czech make, the Fabia Rally2 Evo Edition 120 features "the majority of upgrades introduced for the 2021 Fabia complemented by additional equipment, a special livery and exclusive accessories".

Just 12 examples of the Edition 120 will go on sale with buyers able to add other optional extras.

These include a longer gear set for events with a high average speed, which will raise the car's top speed to 125mph, plus a third set of differential ramps for low-grip gravel or Tarmac events.

Photos: Chicane Media, 5 Nations Rallycross



Young drivers in R2 cars will have a new target

BTRDA JUNIOR CUP THE "PERFECT" FORMAT FOR YOUNG DRIVERS

Cash prizes, one-on-one coaching and parts vouchers on offer for under-25 entrants in R2 machines in 2021

By Luke Barry

A new junior category for drivers under 25 in 1600cc R2 cars will exist in the BTRDA Rally Series from this season with the aim of providing young drivers with a platform for success.

Called the BTRDA Junior R2 Cup, it's the brainchild of Tony Simpson and David Williams who have offered a strong package with cash prizes (£150, £125, £75) available to the top-three finishers on each round with the highest-placed Ford Fiesta driver also benefiting from £150 worth of parts vouchers from British Rally champion Matt Edwards.

The champion will be in line for one-on-one coaching with Tom Williams, a 'next steps' coaching session with Trevor Agnew and a 15-mile test in Callum Black's R5 car as well as a tools and pacenotes package. The existing BTRDA Rallye R2 Cup will still run alongside it, catering for older drivers and turbocharged cars.

Simpson told MN: "I've been doing the BTRDA R2 Cup and it's been undoubtedly the unsung hero of BTRDA for me for the last two years. Based on that, I did a bit of digging and found it's been the tightest class and a lot of the drivers in there are young so we kind of thought is there some scope here in trying to help young drivers and put some structure to it?

"We think the format is perfect," he added. "I hope it inspires some people to think 'this can be a proper little fight, we can get different supporters involved whether it's tyre manufacturers, brands or local dealers'. I can't stress this enough: if you don't drive an R2 hard, especially the 1600 naturally aspirated ones, you'll get found out very, very quickly. If you're quick in an R2 1600, you're quick [in anything], it's that simple. There's no hiding here."

Black added: "It was refreshing to hear Tony put something like this together and huge kudos to him. We immediately wanted to get involved and help support. I know how hard it is as a young driver, especially at the moment. There's some quick lads in that series so I know there'll be a worthy winner."

ROUTE MAPPED OUT FOR JAPAN'S WRC COMEBACK

The route of the World Rally Championship season-deciding Rally Japan is expected to be a repeat of last year's cancelled event.

Scheduled to run from November 12-14, organisers have confirmed that the Tarmac rally is due to begin with a start in host city Nagoya on Thursday November 11 followed by three days of action in the Aichi and Gifu prefectures.

Although strict rules currently prevent foreign nationals from entering Japan, the prospects of Rally Japan going ahead received a boost last week when organisers of the Suzuka 8 Hours, a round of the FIM Endurance World Championship, postponed the bike race from July to November because "it is hoped that there will be a relaxation of Japan's rules by this time", according to EWC promoter Eurosport Events.

New rules boost for zero car

NEW SAFETY CAR NAVIGATION RULES ARE WELCOMED

The FIA's updated 2021 Rally Safety Guidelines – which also apply to national-level rallying – have been well received with a revision to safety car navigation being touted as "a good move".

On all rallies, a zero car (which must be a rally car) runs before the first competition car on the stages and the crew act as the final set of eyes to report any safety concerns to the organisers at rally HQ. Normally, the co-driver has had to use a road book or stage map to navigate which sometimes made it difficult for them to look up and monitor what they needed to. But for 2021, more accurate route notes will be permitted.

Jamie Edwards, who has experience of co-driving a zero car including on Wales Rally GB 2019, told MN: "From my personal perspective having done the role at national and FIA International level, this is a good move. I find it far easier to read basic notes as it gives me lots of time to look up and look out at what is happening compared to the speeds I'm used to competing at. Map reading takes us more concentration to avoid losing your place – so to me, this kind of thinking of the FIA enables the crew to do their best job as they see fit."

McGARRY PLOTS 5 NATIONS TROPHY CAMPAIGN IN REAR-DRIVE VOLVO

European rallycross racer Peter McGarry is eying an assault on the British Rallycross Championship 5 Nations Trophy Supernational category this year with his rear-wheel-drive Volvo C30.

McGarry previously raced Derek Tohill's double title-winning Ford Fiesta TouringCar in the British series in 2019, the same car he raced in the last Euro RX TouringCar round at Holjes, Sweden, in 2018.

Having also claimed the Irish Supernational crown in a Vauxhall VX200, McGarry is planning a fresh assault on the UK series.

"The 5 Nations BRX series has the makings of building into a brilliant championship once up and running properly," said McGarry. "Having a double-header in Mondello Park is fantastic for both the British and Irish championships and also the introduction of Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium will make it an unbelievable finale to the year."

The Volvo has had a refresh for this season. "We spent 2020 giving the car a refresh. It was a great opportunity to send the engine back to Motordesign in Sweden," said McGarry.

McGarry: calendar appeal

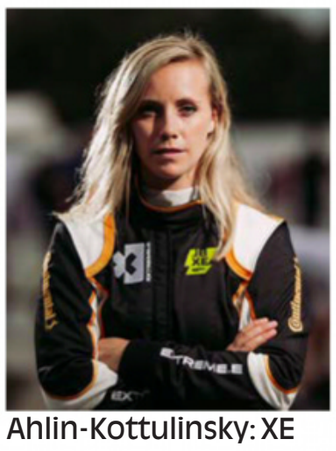
SPANIARD IS FIRST TO QUALIFY FOR RALLY STAR SEARCH

One of the drivers that the UK's FIA Rally Star European finalist will take on has been confirmed.

Alejandro Aroca, a 24-year-old from Spain, qualified for the European final after winning the first of 12 FIA Rally Star #RallyAtHome online events.

Aroca was the fastest over a virtual 5.095-mile stage, which earns him a shot at one of seven places in the 2022 training season. This includes an extensive training programme and six rallies in an M-Sport Ford Fiesta Rally3.

All 12 FIA Rally Star #RallyAtHome winners will qualify for their respective continental final. They are in addition to Motorsport UK's three #RallyAtHome events, which are being contested from March 27 until April 29, to decide the 25 participants for the UK final, an autosolo slalom challenge and series of assessments in Bicester on June 4.



Ahlin-Kottulinsky: XE

AHLIN-KOTTULINSKY TO BE BUTTON'S XE TEAM-MATE

Former RX150 driver Mikaela Ahlin-Kottulinsky has been signed as Jenson Button's team-mate for the inaugural Extreme E season in the 2009 World champion's JBXE squad.

Swedish driver Ahlin-Kottulinsky has form in the Supercar Lites category class within the World Rallycross Championship package. Recently she has raced in Scandinavian Touring Car Championship. She has also been the test driver for XE single-make tyre supplier Continental.

"It feels like a dream come true," she said. "Not only do I get to race with such a fantastic team-mate, but we both really believe in the platform of the series."

Button said: "Mikaela brings with her some fantastic experience behind the wheel and her work with Continental and Extreme E clearly demonstrate what an asset she will be."

●Timo Scheider will act as the male Joker driver for Extreme E. He will be on hand to replace any male drivers should any of them not be able to take part, Jutta Kleinschmidt will take the role as female Joker driver.

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HISTORICS

DOWN THE PUB

ANDREA 'ZIPPO' ZIVIAN

European Historic Rally contender
Age: 49 **Lives:** Italy

Quattro: turns heads

The EHRC is his 2021 plan
"I certainly intend to participate in the entire FIA European Historic Rally Championship 2021 in my Audi quattro, also because in 2019 the victory in category D3 escaped us by a whisker at the last race in Hungary and as a result we want to try again to win the title. Obviously, driving an all-wheel-drive car that made rally history, my favourite race can only be the Lahti Rally on the legendary Finnish dirt roads where the Audi quattro won a lot in the 1980s."

He chose a quattro
"When I started taking part in historic rallies in 2011 I wanted a car that no-one had, and I chose an Audi quattro. I found one in Sweden, which broke immediately the day after arriving. The car was an original Audi chassis used for tests and never in the race in the '80s. Instead all its components were original Audi Sport of the time, so we managed to start at least from a good base. We copied all the parts of the car to be able to replicate them with care then to be able to build other cars identical to the original."

It was a challenge
"We had so many problems trying to make it work because it is not an ordinary car and consequently it was not easy to find workshop manuals or people who understood something, especially for its Pierburg mechanical injection system. It's truly an engineering masterpiece if we think that it was developed in the 1980s, but so difficult for any mechanic who never worked on it at the time to understand and set up."

Latvala noticed
"After so many years we have built a car that went fast, worked and won! To the point that in 2014 I was contacted by Jari-Matti Latvala. I thought it was a joke, but he asked to buy my car. He came to test it and from there the friendship was born. I rented my car to him for three races, then I built for him a car identical to mine that I proudly delivered to him personally at his home in Finland. From there I began to restore both road and racing Audi quattros."

His nickname is Zippo
"You know the famous lighter? My character is a bit like him: I 'turn-on' in a nanosecond!"

Photos: Paul Lawrence

Clubman champ to return in Ralt RT1

FORMER BRITISH F3 WINNER WOOD TO MAKE RACING RETURN

Formula 2 plan for racer after two decades away from the tracks

By Paul Lawrence

After two decades away from racing, Martin Wood will return to competition in this season's Historic Formula 2 Series.

Wood, a Clubmans champion and British F3 racer, has acquired the ex-Nick Fleming Ralt RT1 for his return and has been testing recently with Dan Eagling, who will run the car from Lifetime Racing.

Wood started off in banger racing but shot to prominence by winning the Oceanair Clubman title in 1982 in a Mallock Mk22. He then jumped into British F3 with a Ralt RT3 during the year of Ayrton Senna and Martin Brundle.

Over the following 20 years he raced a range of cars including a Rover 216 GTi but has raced very little for two decades. A trip to watch his old friend Clive Wood race at Brands Hatch last July prompted Wood, 68, to have one more foray into racing.

"As long as I'm not embarrassing myself too much I'll be fine," he told Motorsport News. "I'm still backing off early and braking a bit early and not carrying enough speed. I bought a PlayStation and I'm learning the tracks again."

Wood says he is spending his grandchildren's inheritance. "I'm so grateful to my two sons. I phoned them up and said: 'Look, I want to do this, but it's going cost a lot of money and it's your kids' inheritance'.

"And they both said that I should do it. This last 12 months, if nothing else, has taught us we must do the things we want to do. So hopefully I'll do a few years of this while I'm enjoying it and am fairly competitive."

The original V16 ran for first time since Gonzalez mishap...

BRM V16 fires up ahead of planned rebuild for 2021

The ambitious project to build three fresh examples of the early 1950s V16-engined BRM P15 grand prix car has taken a step forward after an original engine was successfully run on the dyno.

The BRMs are being built for British Racing Motors by Hall and Hall. It used the original 'engine number two' as part of the development programme. The engine had not been run since original BRM driver Jose Froilan Gonzalez over-revved it during BRM's 50th Anniversary celebration at Silverstone in 1999.

"We didn't want to push it too hard on the dyno", said Martin Smith, Hall and Hall's engine technician. "But even so we estimate we got about 550bhp at 10,000 RPM and 2.5 psi – which is a huge step forward as we continue to build our experience and understanding of this astonishing engine."

PRIME MOVER URGES CLASSIC CLUBMANS MARKET REVAMP

Mike Sales, the prime mover behind the category, has issued a plea for owners of Classic Clubmans cars to race them or offer them up for sale.

He says a lot of cars are currently sitting in garages not being used that could be restricting grid numbers.

"We'd like to see the cars out on the grid and not in workshops," said Sales, who knows of around 80 potentially suitable cars. "We believe that more than 50 cars are ready to race and we've got newcomers wanting to buy cars, so there is demand."

Sales is working towards a 20-car grid for Snetterton's season-opening races on April 17-18 and is keen to grow the grid further.

Sales wants Classic Clubmans sales

GETHIN AND RODRIGUEZ CARS AT SHELSLEY

Two stars cars from 1970 will feature at the Shelsley Walsh Classic Nostalgia event on July 17-18, the ex-Peter Gethin Formula 5000 McLaren M10B and the ex-Pedro Rodriguez BRM P154 Can-Am car. The familiar Sid Taylor-entered McLaren will be driven by regular pilot Matthew Wurr, while the 1970 Can-Am car will be on hand thanks to the ongoing restoration work of Andrew Hepworth.

PARIS-PEKING MASTER GERRY CROWN PASSES AWAY

Remarkable Australian marathon rally driver Gerry Crown earlier this month died peacefully aged 89 following a short battle with cancer.

Crown was best known for his incredible three wins on the Peking-Paris marathon in his Australian Leyland P76. He won one of the toughest of all classic rallies in 2010, 2013 and again in 2019. Prior to his illness, he was planning to tackle the 2022 event, when he would have been 90 years old.

Crown had a rallying career that dated back to the 1960s but it was on the marathon events that he really came to the fore. He was a fine competitor and a great character out of the car.

IN BRIEF

John Bloxham
Motorsport News is sad to report the death of John Bloxham, a multiple rally champion and winner of both the RAC British Championship and the Motoring News Rally Championship in 1969. The West Midlander competed in a range of cars including Escorts and Fiat 131s and remained active in rallying until his final weeks.

Bespoke changes
Classic rally organiser Bespoke Rallies has changed its 2021 calendar due to the Covid pandemic and has introduced two new UK events. The Pennine 1000 will run from June 23-27 in the north of England and Scottish Borders, while the Highland 1000 will run in Scotland from September 8-12. Both regularity rallies will cover a route of 1000km or 620 miles.

Exmoor date swap
The Vintage Sports-Car Club is planning to move the date of its Exmoor Trial from Saturday, April 10, to Monday, April 12, to allow the event to run in line with the government Covid roadmap. Prospective competitors are being contacted to about the switch, which will mean the event runs on the first available day for two competitors to travel in the same car.

Single-seaters go
The Classic Formula 3 and Classic Formula Ford 2000 championship will start at the Masters Historic Festival at Donington Park on Good Friday, April 2. The early entry is headed by the leading three drivers from the final rounds of 2020. Benn Tilley will defend his crown in the ex-Rupert Keegan March 743 but faces a tough challenge from Andrew Smith (March 783) and Conor Murphy (March 803B).

Burns tribute plan
Richard Burns will be celebrated during the Shelsley Walsh Classic Nostalgia event on July 17-18, 20 years on from his victory in the World Rally Championship. A selection of his cars, including his 2000 Safari Rally-winning Subaru Impreza, will be tackling the famous hillclimb with the Ralli22 group of Group A, Group B and early WRC cars.

Burns cars at Shelsley

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

FEATURE

KARL JONES

'THE ONLY WAY I KNEW WAS JUST FLAT OUT'

The Welsh wizard oversteered his way around the British tracks in all types of saloon car the 1980s and 1990s. By Matt James

There was never a driver who was more visible in the effort he put into pedalling a racing car quickly than Karl Jones.

Although never quite blessed with the ultimate machinery, the tin-top expert was one of those flamboyant drivers who would have spectators flocking to the wire to watch him perform.

Jones is always held in very high regard by his peers. Those who have worked with him at racing schools over the years, or those who have shared cars with him, will speak admiringly about his pace.

After taking his initial steps in Formula Ford 1600, Jones realised that his pockets weren't deep enough to allow him to try to follow his hero, countryman Tom Pryce, into grand prix racing.

Instead, he worked his way up through the saloon ladder and made it into the British Touring Car Championship during the mighty era of the Ford Sierra RS500. He tamed the beast and was a podium finisher, but a lack of proper budget meant it was always an uphill struggle.

After scratching around for deals, he decided to walk away from motorsport at the end of the 1995 season to concentrate on raising a family. Now, though, the passion has been firmly sparked back into life with outings in historic racing, notably in Paul Linfoot's Ford Sierra RS500 and Ben Eastick's Jaguar D-type. The Welsh wizard's sideways days are not quite behind him yet, as he explains to Motorsport News.

Question: What did Tom Pryce mean to you for your racing career?
Auto Tradition
Via Twitter
Question: You were one of very few Welsh racing drivers when you emerged. How come you chose the circuits rather than the rally stages? What sparked the interest?
Rhys Mainwaring
Via email

Karl Jones: "The interest in motorsport certainly didn't come from my family. I remember when I was about 15 I had a 50cc moped. My dad would take it off me, first for a week, then two weeks, then three weeks and then a month because people were always complaining about me speeding around the place – but the thing would only do 42mph flat out!

"Back in those days, there was hardly any motorsport on television. There was very little of F1, you would maybe get two or three races a year. I didn't really know about motorsport, Motoring News or anything like that. But I do remember watching one grand prix and Tom Pryce was pretty near the front – in fourth or something – and I remember being delighted there was a Welshman doing so well. I just got hooked. I thought 'bloody hell, that's awesome'. I got into following him and once I had got rid of the moped and got into cars, I had a Ford Cortina 1500 and I was flying around everywhere thinking I was him…I trashed that car. It needed an engine rebuild, new dampers, all sorts by the time I had finished with it."

MN: So what took you from flying around the lanes in Wales to the race track? It can't have been easy…

KJ: "Well everyone around home was into rallying, that was the main thing, particularly road rallying. But I just had my mind set on racing. The Western Mail newspaper did a year-long competition. The prize was a half-price year going through the Brands Hatch Racing School to follow in the footsteps of Tom Pryce. I didn't win, but I went and did just one lesson in January 1976, but that was it.

"I came back and I thought 'that was great', but I thought that would be the end of it for me. But later that year, a guy who lived about seven or eight miles from me,

Photos: Gary Hawkins, Jakob Ebrey, Karl Jones

In typical sidedways pose in the RS500 in 1989

Tim Davies, won the newspaper competition. I didn't know him at the time. He started doing Dunlop Star of Tomorrow FF1600 in 1977. I got in touch with him and we became friendly. He used to work on Saturday mornings but he would pick me up quite late in the afternoon – I remember being in the window waiting for him to come by because he was always late – and we had some very interesting drives to tracks all over England.

"One time at Mallory Park, I got introduced to Jackie Epstein, Brian Jones, Syd Fox and Tony Lanfranchi. Tim Davies told me that Jackie was going to be taking over Motor Racing Stables [school] at Brands Hatch the following year with a new fleet of cars. From there, that is how I got involved at Brands Hatch.

"I remember going to the Festival at Brands Hatch and Syd Fox had just won the 1978 FF2000 championship and Tim Davies and I went up to a party in a pub in Greenwich. On the way back, Tim Jones [Brian's son] was driving and I am not sure he was even old enough to have had a licence at that stage. He was driving Syd's road car. There was Tim, me, Syd, Tim Davies, Brian Jones and Jackie Epstein too. Six of us in a road car! I had been on the booze celebrating and I had to wind down the window to be unwell. I had a meeting with Jackie at 0900hrs the next day about a job at the racing school...

"I turned up at 0900hrs as I had been told to do. Jackie turned around and said 'well, if you can be in *that* state last night and still turn up for work on time, you're OK with me. You've got the job'.

Question: Is it true you worked at the racing school to fund your Formula Ford days?
John Charles
Via email
KJ: "While I was still in Wales, I think I was earning £70 a week at the time but to go and work at the racing school was £35 a week – you sacrifice anything to go chasing a dream like that. I was paying £28 a week for my digs and I had £7 left. I had to sell my old car and everything, but I gave it my all.

"As part of my wages, I was allowed to do the racing school – Motor Racing Stables, as it was called then, and I was also allowed to race in the Talbot Sunbeam one-make series that it ran. I think there were about 70 people doing it that first year I raced, and I came second in 1979. I did it for two years, into 1980 as well. A the end of 1980, we were down the Rising Sun pub near Brands and Jackie said to me 'it is quiet during the winter – either I will pay for you go to over to Brazil and see your girlfriend over there, or you can have one of the Royale RP26 school cars to race. It took me less than a second to say 'I'll have the Formula Ford'!

"He gave me a brand new chassis, dampers, wheel bearings, everything and they built it just in time for the first race in 1981 at Croft in the Dunlop Star of Tomorrow FF1600 series. I still think, to this day, it was the most competitive championship I have ever contested. The lowest entry for a round was 50 cars. There were two heats and a final. There were 10 drivers capable of winning.

"I did the Champion of Brands FF1600 series in 1982 and 1983, and that was down to finance really. In 1982, I was runner up to Andy Ackerley and I did the season on £2000 – £100 a race. And then I won it in 1983."

Question: When you won the Champion of Brands FF1600 series in 1983, you won a Formula 1 test in a Lotus. What happened with that?
James Hilton
Via email
KJ: "It was just a publicity thing, and they probably wouldn't have given me full throttle or anything like that. It was a prize for taking the Champion of Brands title, but it never happened. The reason it didn't happen was because it got all political and Lotus was in the process of forging an alliance with Renault for its grand prix engines rather than sticking with the Cosworth DFV that it was using before. John Webb had a few meetings with Lotus's team manager Peter Warr in his bungalow at Brands, but they ended up offering me some money instead.

"By that time, and it had dragged on into 1984, I was in debt from the racing and so I took £1500 instead and straightened myself out."

Leading Star of Tomorrow in 1981

Question: Why did you move to production saloons in 1985? Was that down to budget?
Russell Scobbie
Via email
KJ: "I had tried to carry on my single-seater career. I went to apply for funding from Racing for Britain, because I didn't have any money at all. They had a day in London, and there must has been 100 drivers there. I was very naive and I didn't know my way around the city. I got lost and turned up slightly late. I jumped in and grabbed the closest seat to me, and I was sat next to Eddie Irvine. We had a bit of banter and a laugh throughout the day – it was very entertaining. It got to a point where they asked the room who wanted to be a Formula 1 driver, and all these hands went up. Then they asked who didn't want to be a Formula 1 driver, and I put my hand up – I was the only one. Irvine was pissing himself laughing. I just wanted to earn a living out of racing. I wanted to so saloon cars or Group C sportscars, anything. Even then, I had realised that Formula 1 was virtually an impossible dream. I just wanted to earn a crust – but that didn't happen either, did it, boyo!?

"I think I was probably one of the first [young drivers] to go from single-seaters to saloons. When I was still at Brands, I was stuck in those pit garages for something like six years. You do meet lots of people there on test days and so on and you got to know everybody. I was friendly with [engineer and subsequent team boss] Richard Asquith, and he was running Tony Lanfranchi's car but the following year, in 1985, he was going to work alongside Gerry Marshall at the Marshall Asquith team. They put me in touch with Gerry – he wasn't driving at the time – and he wanted someone to race and I got called up to go and drive for them in a Fiat Strada in 1985 and 1986 in the Production Saloon championships – the BRSCC one, the Uniroyal series, and the BARC one, the Monroe series."

Initial report from Motor Racing Stables: "tends to drive too fast"

MN: What did you make of Gerry Marshall? Did you get along?
KJ: "He was a very good guy. It is strange how he didn't like you if you didn't go well. I remember at the start of the season, the Strada was dreadful and he wouldn't even acknowledge me or talk to me all day. My first race in the Fiat had been at Silverstone – we had only had one test before that at Snetterton. We turned up and it was a wet race. I qualified about third in my class. I was absolutely bricking it on the startline before the race got under way. I saw Tony Lanfranchi and he grabbed my shoulder

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FEATURE

and asked me how I was doing. I told him I was very nervous and I was worried about crashing the car in the conditions. Tony said 'don't worry about it – if you give it everything you've got and you bring it back in a ball, Gerry won't mind so long as he has seen that you have been trying'. You can imagine the banter between Gerry and Tony if I had brought it back in a ball!

"That was like a shot in the arm for me. Actually, it probably gave me too much confidence. I was driving it like a Formula Ford: if there were three cars in a line in front of me, I would pass them all under braking into Woodcote, all around the outside. Full opposite lock, just hanging on to it. I went off three times in that race, but I just managed to win it. That was an interesting debut.

"I remember another race at Brands. Qualifying was wet, and Gerry had been out in the session before. He ran over to me and says 'be careful into Druids, someone has dropped some oil'. I go out, up to Druids and slide straight into the gravel trap. I thought 'Gerry's going to kill me, he will go ballistic'. I was begging all the marshals to push me out so I could get away with it, but it was up to its axles in gravel. They brought out a red flag. Luckily, when they restarted practice, I put it on pole. That was the only thing I could have done to make it up to Gerry. I had a great couple of years with him and I learned so much with him."

Question: How much of a shoestring was the British Touring Car Championship campaign in 1988-1989? What was the Ford Sierra RS500 like to drive?
Jon Wood
Via email

MN: Your team boss Richard Asquith and his wife Jan had so much belief in youThey helped you progress from winning the Uniroyal title in 1987 to the BTCC in 1988 in the Ford Sierra RS500.

KJ: "I have to say a huge thanks to the late Rob Carnell of Duckhams, because I couldn't have done any of it without him. And Richard. Richard is a truly great engineer. I remember when we were struggling with the Ford Sierra RS500, he would always push and push to find the little bits that we could. He was always trying things, and never gave up.

"I think we built and ran the car on £55,000 for that first season in 1988. Then we spent £60,000 for the following year. To put that in perspective, one year at Silverstone, the engine builder was trying something new and we detonated the engine: the bill was £18,000…that was just one weekend!

"[Factory Eggenberger Sierra RS500 driver] Steve Soper was a good friend and I would go and watch him race in Germany in the DTM. I remember being at Hockenheim and I was trying to find out what damper rates and spring rates Eggenberger were using – we were running rally suspension in the UK and we could never get it to work. Even Steve, who was the factory driver, didn't know what the Eggenberger rates were, they were very secretive. Steve said 'let's go and see [fellow Eggenberger driver] Klaus [Ludwig], he will know'. He did, and he gave me all the information! I remember Steve introducing me to Klaus, and telling him I was doing the season on £60,000: Klaus thought that was what I was getting paid. He was quite taken aback when he realised that was actually the season's budget…

"I remember I had to go to Cologne at the beginning of 1989 to get some dampers from Bilstein. Steve said 'go to the factory, see this guy and he will help you out. If you don't get any luck there, go and see the chairman and tell him I sent you'. I went to the factory, but there was a three-month waiting list for dampers and I was hoping to pick them up in two days! The guy at the factory told me it was 'impossible, can't do it'. I drove out, flustered and fed up and went to the office to see the chairman.

"They all wondered what this car was doing driving into the HQ from the wrong side of the road – I had forgotten I was abroad! The chairman came with me back to the factory and, hey presto, within two days I had my new dampers! Steve really was a great help."

MN: You showed so much speed in the BTCC, but the results never came. That must have been frustrating…

KJ: "Definitely. It was hard to win a British Touring Car Championship race back then in a good car, let alone with the things we had against us. The first year we were on Avon tyres and they went off after about four or five laps. And I didn't realise how basic our engine was until I had a ride around Brands Hatch with Guy Edwards after I had finished racing it. Around Druids, Guy's car was so tractable. Mine would be chugging off-cam and then come in with a massive bang – opposite lock central. It was hard hard work.

"Richard was phenomenal, and we just tried to do the best we could with the budget we had."

MN: So what was the RS500 like to drive?

KJ: "They were just phenomenal, unbelievable. We would run well at Thruxton, be up in the top two, but when you would go to Silverstone, I knew as soon as we left the paddock that we were going to be 10th or 12th. It was frustrating. But around Thruxton it was great: I remember one year there, my first flying lap I went out and stuck it on the front row. When I got back to the pits, my hands were shaking. It doesn't get any better than that."

MN: It was all about trying to tame the power, because it had way too much?

KJ: "Well we didn't, did we boyo!? I remember Guy Edwards coming past me in a race once and reckoning that we were about 70bhp down on where we should be."

Question: Did you ever drive at a anything less than 100%?
Jack Crowther
Via email

KJ: "In one of my early races driving for Gerry Marshall at Brands, I was changing gear between Bottom Straight and then back down for Surtees. It was in qualifying and it was wet. Tim Davies was there with Gerry. They waved me in and I will never forget, Gerry was there I the pitlane doing star-jumps and waving his arms. He said 'why are you changing gear, let the torque of the engine do the work. And Tim grabbed me by the shoulder and told me to go out and give it 100%. Every time I was in the car, that was my philosophy. You always try, but I always remember that, and I was always like that in testing, qualifying, anywhere."

Jones returned to drive a Formula Ford in 2014 in a borrowed Mark Cole crash helmet

In the TechSpeed BMW in 1992

The second season in the Sierra showed promise but was tough

Question: Do you still follow the British Touring Car Championship? What were the main differences in driving style you had to use, and which would you have preferred to drive for a factory team – Ford or BMW?
Simon Hill
Via email

KJ: "It sounds like Ian Flux has written that question, because Fluxie always insists that the M3 was a better car! It is really tricky. I drove for John Clark in the M3 and we did very very little testing. Even if they put qualifying tyres on it, I could never get a lap time out of it. A lot of that was a lack of seat time. It was very clinical. I remember Andy Rouse speaking to me and saying that I wouldn't enjoy those cars then, because they were more like a Formula 3 car with all that grip. You probably had to drive them in a neater way than I was used to. I prefer the car moving around.

"So for me, the Cosworth RS500, I would say, is the best car that has been in touring cars for the last 50 years.

"I was very fortunate to have been a part of that era and absolutely thoroughly enjoyed driving the car on the limit."

Question: When you joined it, did you realise how big the British Touring Car Championship would go on to be?
Barry May
Via email

KJ: "Probably not: we were just there enjoying what we were doing. I was a bit unlucky because Vic Lee offered me a drive in the BMW M3. Richard Asquith and Vic Lee had been partners too, and Vic offered me a drive for 1990 for £40,000. It was a mega, mega deal for the time. It was the year Jeff Allam drove for him, and Will Hoy went on to win the title for them a year later.

"Going from the Cosworth into that, I think I would have been involved in the BTCC a lot longer had I been able to take up that deal. It came down to money. Duckhams, my long-time backer, went into motorcycle racing instead and it was just bad timing for me."

Question: Given your driving style in the junior racing categories, what were your weaknesses that we missed, and how did you sort them to become a professional race driver?
David Button
Via Facebook

KJ: "Well, I didn't become a professional, did I!? There was a major weakness. I was good enough on the track, but I was no good with the politics and bullshit that was going around. I didn't want to deal with it and that was my downfall. I was all about the driving and I think I am too nice of a person and I don't push myself like maybe some of the others did. I found that side of it very difficult. And, having read about Tom Pryce, I think maybe I am a bit like he was, especially in my younger days.

"I remember one race at Brands in 1982 and I had a problem in practice, and I was about 10th on the grid. [Brands Hatch bosses] Angela and John Webb were in the hospitality suite and Webby had a bet with his mates and said I would win. He doubled the bet halfway through and I won the race. Afterwards, Webby said 'you will get a call from Eddie Jordan in the week to see about racing in F3 the following year'.

"Eddie phoned and asked if I was talking to any sponsors. I was just so naïve. I asked him how much it was and he said £80,000. I thought 'bloody hell, I find it hard to make £2000'. I told him I was talking to the Welsh Development Board and the Welsh Tourist Board. He told me he would come and have a meeting with them along with me if I wanted him to, but I told him he would be wasting his time.

"I didn't know that if Eddie had found you some money and you were doing well, he would find the rest. I just didn't know that was how it worked. I didn't have many regrets, but that was probably one of them."

"My time in Eurocar was very tough"

Karl Jones

Welshman felt the odds were stacked against circuit stars in Eurocar

Mr 100% Jones: full-focus mode

"I was no good at pushing myself"

Karl Jones

Jones has revelled in sharing the Jaguar D-type with Ben Eastick and won the RAC Woodcote Trophy

Taking it to the limit at Dingle Dell in 1989

Touring Car Championship and, if you do, who are your favourite drivers?
Simon Hill
[dad of BTCC racer Jake Hill]
Via email
KJ: "None of them: they are all in hairdressers' cars! That's a joke. I do watch it half a dozen times over the year and I have been really impressed with Ash Sutton. I just love to watch him race because he always gives 100%, even if he has issues with the car. He is fantastic to watch. I know quite a few of them because I have worked with them at McLaren on the road cars. I will have to say Jake Hill too, and I think he has got a good chance of winning it this year. He is another one who gives it everything. And I know it is not touring cars, but I have been really impressed with Harry King in Porsches too. I think he has a bright future."

Question: Can Karl tell us about his time in Eurocar, please?
Mark Paulson
Twitter
KJ: "What a load of shit that was! I did a couple of races with Barry Lee at the end of 1994. I raced at Pembrey and Brands Hatch. I went and had a seat fitting and they told me that Alf Boarer was setting my car up for me for Brands. I looked at it and told them that the set-up they were putting on it would never work for Brands. They probably thought I was going to be fast around there. Someone was trying to have me over a bit, I think.

"They used to draw the grids out of a hat so qualifying didn't matter, but the car was dreadful in practice. I knew three changes I wanted to do, but I couldn't do them all at once because I wanted to see what effect each one had. In that 20-minute session, I went out, tried one change, came back in, then tried the other and then the last. In 20 minutes, I transformed the car and that worked well for me. The following year I had Duckhams backing and I was racing with Malcolm Forbes, but we had quite a few breakdowns and the reliability wasn't good.

"I always used to think that there was one rule for the Hot Rod boys, and one for the circuit racing guys. The Hot Rod guys always got looked after. I found that frustrating, and that meant it was the worst thing I ever did in my racing career, Kevin Clarke offered me a paid drive for 1996 in a two-car team, but I had enough and I stopped racing altogether at that time. Shane Bland got the drive I should have had, and I was really pleased, because we had worked together before: sure, he is a Hot Rod boy, but he drives like a proper racing driver!

"By that stage, I knew what my strengths and weaknesses were and I knew I was good enough on track but not with the politics. I didn't want it anymore."

Question: What was favourite racing car to drive and the worst one?
Marion Speed
Via Twitter
KJ: "As I have just explained, the worst car would be the Eurocar. Favourite? I can't decide. A few years ago, I was due to race Paul Linfoot's Ford Sierra RS500 and Ben Eastick's D-type Jaguar on the same day at the Silverstone Classic, and a Lotus Cortina too. I had it in my head that I would be able to decide on that day which was my favourite, but we had a problem with the RS500 unfortunately. That would have been a great comparison. The Jaguar and the RS500 are brilliant in different ways, but they are both prepared to bite you in the backside at any moment when you are on the edge. I love that though, that is an amazing feeling. I love feeling the car dance and being ready to catch you out. They are both my favourites, if I am allowed two?

"The Escort RS Turbo that I drove in Production Saloons too was fantastic. I can't have too many, can I? The car was so good, they kept restricting the turbo. I still managed to win Class B and the overall title in the Uniroyal series in 1987."

Question: How did the switch to historic racing come about?
Malcolm Munt
Via email
KJ: "A good friend of mine, Mark Cole, was racing in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB and he invited me to go along and watch him in 2015. I had stopped for the reasons I told you and I have a young family too. They had got older by that stage and wanted more independence, and I thought about racing again. The historic scene definitely appealed to me but I am hopeless at pushing myself to go out and get drives. It was dear Neil Cunningham, who was a really good friend of mine, who made it happen. He put me in touch with Bob Pepper and I drove his Mustang. Then Neil put me in touch with Ben Eastick, who is a brilliant guy who I get on well with. I love the environment. It is friendly, a great atmosphere and some brilliant cars and in 2019 Ben and I won the RAC Woodcote Trophy: it had taken a long time – the last time I won a title was in 1987! It was good to know I could still do it, and I am eternally gratefully to Ben and Paul Linfoot for the chances they have given me."■

Ford Sierra RS500 is the best tin-top of the last 50 years, says Jones

Jones has shared the rear-wheel-drive RS500 with owner Linfoot

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FEATURE

HERALDING A NEW ERA

Between karting and Formula E there's not much to help racers live electric dreams. The new ERA championship wants to provide the first step, as Graham Keilloh discovers

The ERA boss Dieter Vanswijgenhoven

ERA is the first all-electric junior single-seater series

We know about the growth of electric power in motorsport. We know about Formula E, and a few other categories near the top. While at the other end of the scale, electric karting competitions are ever-multiplying. But what is between them? This is where the ERA championship comes in.

This is the world's first all-electric junior single-seater category, which is placed at Formula 4 level and is set for its bow this autumn with a mini-season, ahead of a full campaign in 2022.

The ERA championship's technical and business director Dieter Vanswijgenhoven tells Motorsport News: "We have a karter for example that only wants to do electric racing but after his karting there's nothing, and you don't go from a kart into a Formula E car or into a Pure ETCR car, there's always a little step in between and we want to be that first step. We're offering in motorsport terms an affordable way to get that experience.

"The driving style [with electric power] is completely different because you've got your torque immediately, and regen [energy regeneration], those are the two things that massively change. If you want to save some energy [you] coast and regen before a corner.

"Everybody sees that road cars are only accelerating towards electric," Vanswijgenhoven continues, "and a lot of people are realising that is going to happen in motorsport as well. Formula E has been going for quite a long time now but the rest is catching up and we're doing our part in that."

Vanswijgenhoven is a motorsport fan and former racer, and his interest in electric power grew from business work developing pressure vessels for hydrogen. The ERA championship then further grew organically from his involvement in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) projects with electric karts for schools, plus his work with Formula Student and its electric focus. Likewise Beth Georgiou, ERA's sporting director, ran the UK's Formula Student.

The ERA car is a Dome 'Mitsu-Bachi' F110e, weighing 650kg including the driver with a 130kW motor and 24kWh battery pack all offering 175bhp. The development car is running and six cars are in build, with 12 set to compete this autumn and up to 24 next year.

The inaugural season is to run from September to November, entirely at Zolder. "Just because of Covid," Vanswijgenhoven says of the single-circuit debut. "It's still a bit of a messy year. And Zolder is our home circuit, literally five to 10 minutes away from our factory. So we're looking at doing a very tiny little season to show that we're here, that we're doing stuff [and] that the cars are really cool.

> ***"After karting there's nothing electric"***
>
> ***Dieter Vanswijgenhoven***

"Zolder is actually the perfect track for electric cars because it is quite technical, it isn't like Spa where you're on full throttle for maybe 85% of the time: for an electric car it's not that interesting, your pack would just run out way too quick!"

And there's more. ERA in July is launching at Zolder the world's first electric racing school with ERA cars. Then early next year it hosts for 12 drivers a four-week winter camp in California and Nevada with six races and much more besides. There's a special prize too.

"We [will] train them up from all angles," Vanswijgenhoven explains, "so they get well over 28 hours of track time, and off track we give them technical training, sponsorship training, media training, food, fitness, everything they need to know to have a motorsports career.

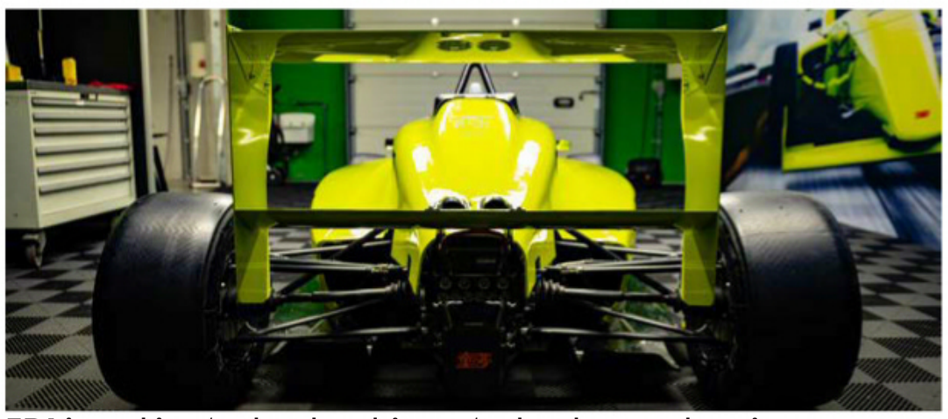
"So it's ideal for starting Formula 4 drivers [and] for all the karters that are looking to move up to single-seaters. And the overall winner, which doesn't necessarily mean the one that wins all

The development car has been testing: its 175bhp feels like 200 plus!

Photos: Kenny Leys

Technical changes can be made in Innovation Class

This winter there will be a 12-driver bootcamp in USA


ERA is seeking to develop drivers, technology and engineers

ENGINEERING OUTCOMES

The ERA championship is not only about developing drivers in electric motorsport nor even only developing electric technology. It also focuses on developing electric engineering talent.

And it has two specific schemes that underline the point. First it has the ERA Cup for those aged 14 to 18. For this you order an ERA base kit for a 100% electric car, then design and build the bodywork and race it at regional events for points.

"At the races they come and race in the paddock where the championship cars are driving and they can [think] 'if I now go to university I can be involved with the championship car'," Dieter Vanswijgenhoven says.

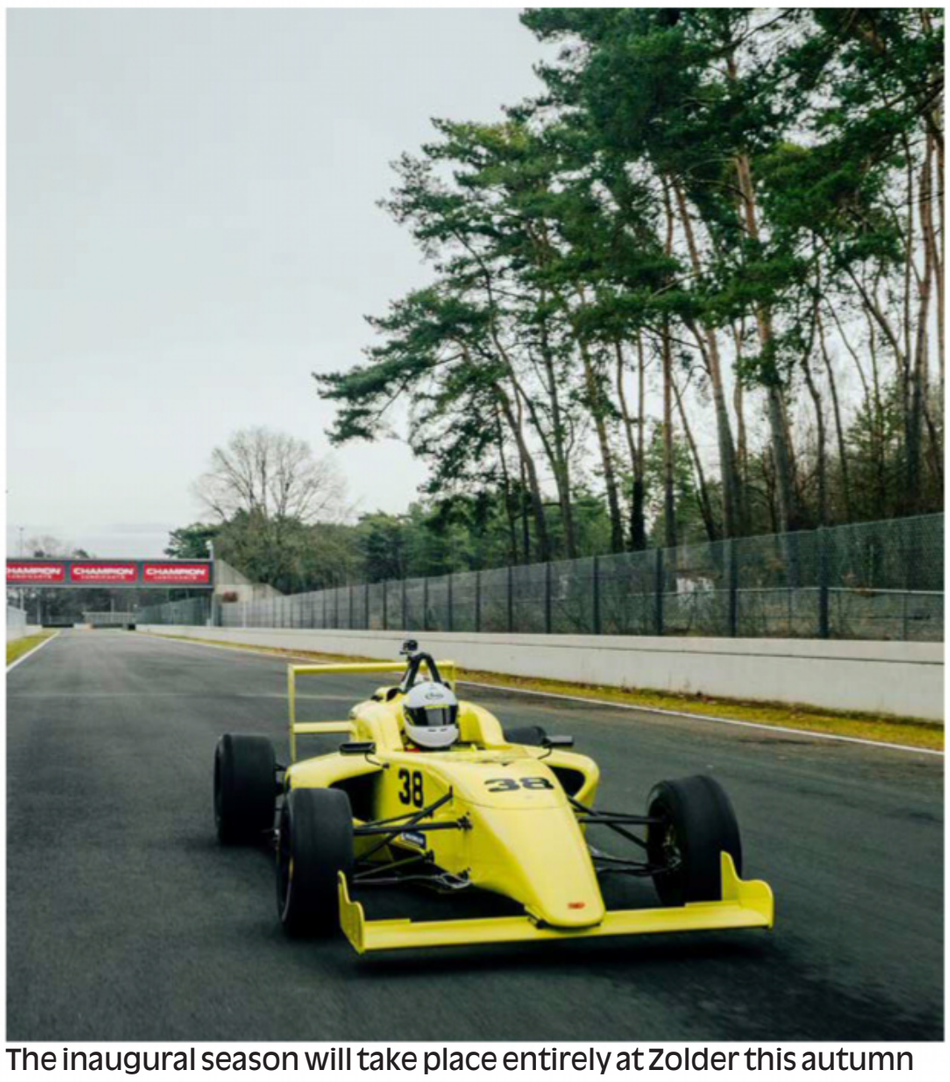
And this progression is aided by that ERA also offers for universities a three-stage concept competition, that can even be a precursor to racing in the Innovation Class for real.

"The first step is they develop something [a technical concept] on paper," Vanswijgenhoven explains, "then they get the sub-chassis where everything has to fit into as a second step, they build a physical version of it. And then the third step is connecting that physical version to the rest of the car and go race. So that's the stepping stones we give to universities to get into the Innovation Class.

"And then the next step for the young engineers [is thinking] 'I've finished university now I can go to a professional team in ERA championship or maybe go and work for one of the Formula E teams, or go to work for BMW, Porsche or whatever automotive to go and develop whatever is on the road'. So [it's] a career path for a 14-, 15-year -olds all the way up to having a career in motorsport or automotive that we're trying to set out."

"ERA should cost less than Formula 4"

Dieter Vanswijgenhoven



The inaugural season will take place entirely at Zolder this autumn

ERA should suit electric car small-to-medium-sized companies

the races, it is a combination of things like how well did they perform in media, social media, fitness, how professional did they behave throughout the four weeks, the driver with the full package can win a scholarship for the 2022 full-on season." The camp costs €95,000 to enter.

Details of the full-scale 2022 season are being finalised, and hope is of eventually partnering with other electric categories to create full-electric weekends. ERA races, as a minimum, will be streamed online.

There is more to ERA even so. As well as it having a Sports Class wherein competitors use the standard car, there is an Innovation Class allowing technical developments by teams. The classes are set to share a grid, with separate points and championships, though depending on numbers may be split.

"We're seeing a lot of teams want to participate, at the start anyway, in the Sports Class to get a little bit of feeling with electric motorsports which most of the teams don't have a lot of experience with," Vanswijgenhoven says.

"Year three, 2023, I'm expecting to see some teams starting to switch to Innovation Class, and that's going to be fun to see, maybe different battery chemistries and some interesting solutions with what they do with the battery and the motors.

"For the Innovation Class teams, let's say they have an amazing idea around the motor and the transmission but they don't know anything about batteries, they can just get the battery off us and then do the innovation side on the motor or gearbox or whatever. It just diversifies it more and opens it up to a lot more people to eventually participate.

"From a battery point of view you can only use 24kWh in a race and then on top of that whatever you regen, so if you build a battery that's only 20kWh because it's lighter, that's fine. If you build a bigger battery, let's say 30kWh, that's also fine, if you think you can win the race because it is more efficient. And then from a motor side you can only use 130kW of power, if you come with a 200kW motor fine but you can't use everything over 130kW, but there's a lot of potential advantages to that.

"There's so much to play with there, as long as [you] keep the weight in check, it needs to be 650kg maximum weight with the driver."

Of course, there are potential flipsides to this technical exploration. Someone could steal a march and turn races into demonstration runs. Plus there's the ever-present threat of a debilitating technical 'arms race'. How will ERA guard against these?

"We have two quali sessions with no charging in between," Vanswijgenhoven says. "The length of the two sessions is longer than what the car can do, so if somebody takes a lot of effort to set the pole position time in quali one they might struggle to do that in quali two, whereas if somebody takes it easy in quali one they could win pole in quali two. We're hoping to see the grid mix up a little bit.

"Then from the Innovation Class point of view if somebody has, let's say, a motor that is so much better than everybody else's we give them a couple of races to benefit from that but after that they need to make that motor available for other teams to buy at a set price.

"We have no interest in becoming Formula E at all, we don't want prices to go nuts and teams having to put in millions, we want to stay at a motorsport-affordable level. That's where all those small-to-medium-sized companies that are popping up all over the world that are involved with electric cars can show their technology in a not-crazily expensive way and come and race with us.

"It should be cheaper than Formula 4," Vanswijgenhoven adds. "Because you need less people [with an electric car], you need less work on the car done. Once you're done racing you have to clean up the car, do some spanner checks and you're pretty much ready, just because of the simplicity of an electric car. There's less moving parts, there's no motor that needs to be rebuilt, everything is very sturdy, it keeps going basically."

ERA's car has recently had 15 to 20 days' development on the dyno of the championship's tertiary education institution partner Karel de Grote Hogeschool, plus it's had several hours of on-track testing including with ERA managing director Rudi Penders driving. "He said it feels like a car that's over 200bhp where this one is only 175bhp," Vanswijgenhoven reports. "He always steps out the car with a big smile on his face!

"It's really cool that we've been able to keep the electric car weighing as much as the internal combustion car, everything is built to be a Formula 4 car with 650kg. That was one of our goals, we can show that we can do what a Formula 4 car does but electric within the same parameters."

Interest from drivers and teams has been encouraging, and the aims are high. "In the long term we're aiming to have national championships all over the world," Vanswijgenhoven says, "so that we have maybe a Benelux, UK, Spain, Italy, Germany, France, Japan, New Zealand [and] America national championship, all over the place. We already have our Japanese partners Dome asking to start it up in Japan after our first European series, we've got interest from Canada and America, New Zealand, South America. There is a lot of interest all over the world, everybody is now just waiting to see season one kick off.

"After that we'll see if we can put a layer on top, like a regional champion, all the winners of all the national series coming together to a Champions League-style shootout. And we hope that the electric karting keeps on growing at a speed that it's growing now in all those countries so that we also have the driver career path set out in electric racing."

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

FEATURE

THE COUNTDOWN OF OUR FAVOURITE RACING FERRARIS

MN's experts pick out their favourite competition machines from the Italian giant. By Matt James

The wraps came off the Ferrari SF21 in the build-up to the three-day pre-season grand prix test session at Bahrain, and it is the machine that the Italian firm finally hopes that either Charles Leclerc or Carlos Sainz can push the sleeping giants back to the top step of the podium.

The launch of any new Ferrari creates a buzz of excitement. There is something about the red cars that stirs the blood. While grand prix machines these days bear a striking resemblance to each other, that hasn't always been the case.

Ferrari has a heritage that is unmatched in motorsport, and we have set out on a task to narrow it down and pick out our favourite competition Ferraris.

Sportscar and GT racing was as much of a playground for the famous firm as grand prix racing was, so it is only right that we include the roofed racers here too.

Here are our results. If you disagree, feel free to let us know by emailing matt.james@kelsey.co.uk.

Iconic: Prancing Horse legend

Expert panel: David Addison (MN columnist at large and ace talker); Rob Austin (historic F1 racer); Ben Edwards (Formula 1 commentator); Ian Flux (he's driven a few things); Tim Harvey (BTCC champion); Matt James (MN editor); Graham Keilloh (MN deputy editor); Paul Lawrence (MN historic editor); Graham Lister (MN's rally guru); Calum Lockie (Ferrari fan and historic racing pacesetter); Tiff Needell (Former F1 driver); Steve Rider (motorsport guru).

Photos: Motorsport Images

10 Ferrari 312

The 312 was almost overlooked

The three-litre era for Formula 1 spawned a number of remarkable innovations, included among them the Cosworth DFV that went on to power a phalanx of grand prix winners.

Ferrari, though, stuck to its 12-cylinder guns when the new dawn broke on motorsport's top-flight in 1966. The powerplant was sleeved down from the 3.3-litre version that was being used in the 275P2 sportscar, which meant it was heavier than any bespoke motor. The initial machine was unwieldy, and the engineering prowess of driver John Surtees walked out of the door after an internal power struggle midway through that first year with the 312.

The car was improved in 1967 but a fatal crash for Lorenzo Bandini and a career-ending accident for Mike Parkes once again derailed the challenge of the 312.

There was strife back at base too, with Enzo Ferrari in the middle of restructuring the team and the Formula 1 team was left to fend for itself amid these background changes. Unthinkably there was only one F1 victory (for Jacky Ickx) between 1967 and 1969, before the 312B, which came on stream for 1970, put the Italian team back on the championship trail.

9 Ferrari 156

The sharknose is one of the most famous Formula 1 cars

One of the most iconic of all the Ferrari shapes, the 156 'Sharknose' was Ferrari's answer to the new engine regulations in Formula 1, which slimmed the powerplants down from 2.5-litres to 1.5-litres.

Ferrari had been at the forefront of the 1.5-litre Formula 2 scene and so the switch in grand prix regulations meant that it was well prepared for the 1961 season. Richie Ginther, Phil Hill an Wolfgang von Trips were the full-season drivers – although Ferrari didn't enter the final race of the year in Watkins Glen, which followed the death of von Trips in a crash at the penultimate round at Monza.

The 156 Sharknose showed prodigious straightline speed and lapped up the circuits like Spa, Reims and Monza. That was particularly true when a developed engine was fitted in the early part of the season: out went the Dino 65-degree V6 and in came a 120-degree format designed by Carlo Chiti.

Six podium finishes from seven races helped Phil Hill secure the title ahead of von Trips and Ferrari outscored Lotus in the race for the constructors' spoils. The car was used again, albeit less successfully, in 1962 and then an aero version appeared in 1963.

At the end of that season, boss Enzo Ferrari demanded that all the 156s were destroyed.

8 Ferrari 126C2

The 126C was driven by four racers in 1982, including Didier Pironi (above), and won constructors' title

Briton Harvey Postlethwaite was a new recruit at Ferrari, and they needed him. The original 126CK that had been driven by Didier Pironi and Gilles Villeneuve in 1981 had been an ungainly handful. It was only Villeneuve's sublime skill that helped the Scuderia rescue some success with heroic wins at Monaco and at Jarama in Spain.

The 126CK had been unreliable and Ferrari only finished fifth in the constructors' standings: mind you, that had been an improvement on the nadir of 1980 when it had placed 10th…

Postlethwaite set to work immediately on the 1.5-litre turbocharged machine. He reworked the car and introduced a full monocoque construction, which immediately made it slimmer and improved the handling, even though the powerplant was still somewhat heavier than its rivals.

The 1982 season was a tumultuous one for Ferrari. Villeneuve's fatal accident in qualifying for the Belgian Grand Prix at Zolder in May was a hammer blow not only for the team, but for motorsport on a wider scale. Then Pironi was critically injured in a practice crash in Germany and that knocked the stuffing out of the Scuderia's drivers' title charge.

Patrick Tambay and Mario Andretti completed the season for the Italian team, and Frenchman Tambay was a winner in the German Grand Prix at Hockenheim. Despite the dark clouds that had gathered over the squad throughout 1982, Ferrari still managed to beat McLaren to the constructors' championship.

7 Ferrari F40

The major flaw for the F40 was its launch timing...

Jaws dropped when the wraps came off the Ferrari F40 in 1987. Built to mark the Italian firm's 40th anniversary, it pushed all of the boundaries for a high-performance supercar.

It was faster, more powerful and more expensive than anything that had come before it.

Without any proper structure for international GT racing, the F40's competition career was restricted early on. It found a home in the IMSA categories in the States and was also seen in domestic GT competitions.

The three-litre turbocharged V8 machine was turned into a racer by Ferrari specialist Michelotto with the LM version and there was later a Competizione. It raced at the Le Mans 24 Hours in 1994 through to 1996 in privateer hands.

Its best result was 12th in 1995, the Pilot-backed machine in the hands of Michel Ferte, Olivier Thevenin and Carlos Palau.

The F40 had found a home in the growing BPR Global Series in 1995, but newer machines like the McLaren meant the long-in-the-tooth Ferrari was never really in the game.

It looked great and it sounded fabulous, but in terms of worldwide GT racing, it was caught in no man's land. That is a real shame.

6 Ferrari 512S/512M

Sportscar racing was bestriding its way through the motorsport environment in the early 1970s, and the days of Ford v Ferrari were soon superseded by Porsche v Ferrari. The Porsche 917 against the Ferrari 512 was perhaps one of the most beloved eras for endurance motorsport, no doubt helped by a starring role on the silver screen in Steve McQueen's *Le Mans* movie.

The 512 was built in 1969 and 1970 to slot into the Group 6 regulations, which had been tweaked to mean manufacturers had to build 25 examples. That was all well and good, but the rule makers changed their mind again in 1970 and determined that 1971 would be the last season for the five-litre Group 6 regulations. At a single brush stroke, it took the impetus out of sportscar racing and manufacturers were unwilling to spend big on cars that would soon be redundant.

The car appeared initially as the 512S and would later be given the M branding as a modified version in the latter part of 1970. Porsche had stolen a march with the new formula and was happy to have works-supported cars flying the flag for them, teams such as John Wyer's JWA squad and Porsche Salzburg operation. Ferrari entered as a works team and, apart from a victory at the Sebring 12 Hours in Florida, it was firmly in second place to the 917. That Sebring win was, amazingly, the car's only major success.

That was because Ferrari turned its attentions to the three-litre 312 in 1971, and the 512Ms were in the hands of privateers. A Penske-run version, driven notably by Mark Donohue, was a major player and the Scuderia Montjuich car of Jose 'Hunky' Juncadella and Nino Vaccarella led at Le Mans before a transmission failure. But the fire that burned so brightly in the car was starved of its development oxygen and gradually faded away.

Chris Amon in flight in a 512M

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

FEATURE

World champion Alain Prost handled the 641 in 1990

5 Ferrari 641

The landscape of Formula 1 was changing, and turbos were being spooled down and put away. Grand prix racing had embraced a normally aspirated formula in 1989 and Ferrari went back to its traditional 12 cylinders.

Not only that, the 641's predecessor, the 640, caused a revolution in F1 with the introduction of the semi-automatic gearbox. The original thought process was to speed up the gearchanges, which were always a burden for the turbocharged engines that needed to maintain their boost levels. Even though F1 went normally aspirated, the advantages of a quick shift were deemed to be so strong that the idea was implemented anyway.

Englishman John Barnard oversaw this step change in the top flight of the sport from his office in a small village just outside Guildford in Surrey, rather than the corridors of Maranello, something that upset the Italian press greatly. The 640, gorgeous looking with its Coke bottle rear end, won first time out with Nigel Mansell driving but then proved unreliable and, by the end of the year, Barnard had quit the team and headed for Benetton instead. Had the model taken more victories, it is likely that the original version would have been higher up this list.

Former McLaren guru Steve Nichols headed to the Scuderia and Alain Prost joined the Italian firm too for 1990. Tweaks were made to the aerodynamics of the car and the wheelbase was lengthened. A newly developed variant of the 3.5-litre engine was introduced in time for the third round.

Prost powered to five wins over the course of the campaign, which included three victories -back-to-back in a purple patch in the summer. The Frenchman came within a whisker of winning the World championship – until he was (literally) torpedoed by Ayrton Senna – while team-mate Mansell took a single victory in Portugal.

It was a car that put Ferrari right back at the front, and it did it with a certain style and elegance.

4 Ferrari 312T/T2

Lauda gelled with the 312T and then the 312T2 motor

Being as one was essentially a development of the other, the 312T and the T2 (and the T2B) have to be included in the same breath here.

Designer and engineer Mauro Forghieri was responsible for so much that was good at Ferrari, particularly at the cutting edge of Formula 1 in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. And it was on his insistence that the reworked 312 for the 1975 season was fitted with a transversely-mounted gearbox – hence the T in the car's type number.

It took over from the 312B3 early in 1975 and, despite some initial teething problems on its debut in the South African Grand Prix in the hands of Clay Regazzoni and Niki Lauda, it quickly became the thing to have.

That 1975 season gave Ferrari its first drivers' and constructors' titles since 1964, when John Surtees had prevailed. Lauda's flush of four wins from five races in the middle of the year sealed it for him.

The 312T brand wasn't done there, and the new T2 was modified to deal with new regulations concerning the grand prix cars' airbox. So, for 1976, although the older T model was used up until May, the T2 came on stream for the latter part of the campaign.

Would Lauda have won the title had he not had his infamous crash at the Nurburgring Nordschleife in 1976? Most probably, although it would have robbed the British public of the James Hunt fairy tale.

Ferrari forged on with the 312T2B for 1977, with various aerodynamic tweaks employed to try and keep up with its rivals. But the tweaks worked, and Lauda performed one of the most heroic feats in motorsport by returning after his dreadful injuries to win his second World championship.

Lauda had been partnered (until he quit Ferrari towards the end of 1977) by Argentine Carlos Reutemann, who took the T2B's final victory in the second race of 1978, the Brazilian Grand Prix.

3 Ferrari 333SP

Gianpiero Moretti was the driving force behind 333SP

The Ferrari 333SP was something that European fans would have had to work hard to go and watch race. It was originally destined as an IMSA racer, with the impetus behind the car coming from MOMO boss Giampiero Moretti.

It marked Ferrari's first proper sportscar assault for 20 years when it made its debut in 1994. It was an unusual project for Ferrari as it had collaborated with Dallara on the design of the chassis, transmission and suspension, while Hewland provided the gearbox. But at its heart was the F130E, 65-degree V12 with a displacement of 3997cc. The five valves-per-cylinder engine pushed out more than 640bhp and used a lightweight aluminium block and cylinder head. The engine was previously used as an F1 motor, but its expanded displacement fitted the new sportscar regulations perfectly and Ferrari gave its acknowledgement to a programme that would use the firm's name. And the cars were blood red – which also fitted in nicely with the MOMO brand. It was evocative.

It was an immediate success in the USA, taking Fermin Velez to the drivers' title and continued to run at the front in the States until 1998 (despite protestations from the organisers, who were keen to restrict the engine's output).

The machine was also a dominant force in the FIA Sportscar Championship and it won all bar one race in that maiden campaign in 1998. Title success stretched on to 2001, when the car was becoming outclassed and that even led privateer team Doran Racing to fit a Judd engine to the car to try and remain at the front in the American Le Mans Series.

It wasn't a thoroughly official Ferrari effort, but it was one that sealed a place in the heart of fans who were desperate for the Prancing Horse to return to the Le Mans 24 Hours. Now, with the Scuderia's recently revealed plans, it won't have to wait too much longer for that dream to come true again.

2 Ferrari 312T4/T5

Jody Scheckter battled Gilles Villeneuve for the World title in 1979

There is an argument to say that the T4 and the T5 version of the Ferrari 312 should be aligned to the 312T and the T2, but there is one defining factor that means this machine has made it very close to the summit of this poll and that factor is actually human: Gilles Villeneuve.

Actually, that is probably not fair. It was the start of an aerodynamic journey for the men from Maranello that made the car stand apart from its predecessors.

Ferrari, after the glittering success it had achieved with Niki Lauda in the mid-1970s, was suddenly caught behind the black-and-gold ball – and that black-and gold ball was in the shape of the JPS-backed Lotus machines.

The British team's revolution was in under-the-car aerodynamics with the onset of ground effect. It harnessed the intricacies during 1978 and ripped up the F1 designers' rule book.

Ferrari, along with Alfa Romeo, was committed to pursuing the flat-12 layout of their powerplants in grand prix racing in 1979, which meant that making the underneath of the car as svelte as possible was not as easy as those teams that were using the Cosworth V8s.

And, don't forget, ground effect was also a device that was new to all the other teams except Lotus. The Norfolk firm had stolen a march, the rest were on a rescue mission.

By any standards, 1-2 in the World championship for drivers at the end of the season showed that the Italians had caught up pretty quickly. Jody Scheckter and Villeneuve won three races apiece, but it was the South African's experience and guile that helped him to outscore the little Canadian in the other car.

Ferrari tried to push the boundaries in 1980 with the T5, but it was a disaster. After a hugely successful decade in F1, the trademark Ferrari unreliability crept back into the T5 and Scheckter only scored two points. What a fall from grace. Villeneuve only managed six marks in the 14 races.

But it is the images of Villeneuve on maximum attack on the T4 that probably live longest in the memories. It is ironic, though, because ground effect was perhaps the complete antithesis of driver Villeneuve's style.

1 Ferrari 250

250 TR/250 GTO/ 250 LM/ 250 GT Breadvan

Surtees in full flight in the TT at the wheel of a 250 GTO

Where do you start with the story of the 250, which appeared in numerous guises as it was revamped to cope with rule changes and circuit demands? The model was mouth-watering in all of its guises.

The road car had been around since 1952, but the competition career began with the 250 TR (Testa Rossa) in 1957.

The car was built to conform with new World Sportscar Championship regulations and the V12, Gioacchino Colombo-inspired engine, which Ferrari had used previously but then 'retired' from competition, was pressed back into service – although much bigger than its original 1.5-litre displacement.

The 250 TR took a trio of wins at Le Mans in the late 1950s and early 1960 and three World championship titles.

It was followed by a GT version that was forced to become a prototype. The 250 LM was created for the 1964 season, but there were homologation issues with the governing body in terms of the production run that moved it from the GT classes to the prototype division. It carried on the success with victory at Le Mans for Masten Gregory and Jochen Rindt in a North American Racing Team-run version in 1965.

But it was the gorgeous production-based 250 GTO, modelled with slippery bodywork to cope with the high-speed demands of tracks like Le Mans, that the legend was cemented.

It was, perhaps, the ultimate iteration of the 250 variety and, although it had been on sale was a road-going GT car since the original iteration in 1952, 250 GTO only appeared on the tracks in 1962 for the first time. The GT roots of the car made it instantly an icon, opposed to the pure racing-bred prototypes.

The 250 GT Berlinetta had taken Ferrari back to the top of sportscar racing, but the specially homologated development the 250 GTO (the 'O' standing for *omologato*, Italian for homologation), was a jaw-droppingly beautiful car.

The three-litre rear-wheel-drive machine which was the last of the front-engine Italian beauties to run at the head of the pack, won three World titles in class before it was eventually outpaced.

There were some curious to the 250 family too. Giotto Bizzarrini, who had been involved with the creation of the car at the Maranello factory, was later employed by private team Scuderia Serenissima. He worked with body specialist Piero Drogo to create a rebodied version to eliminate drag from the original SWB models. Dubbed the Breadvan given the extra bodywork at the back.

It was a race winner, but unreliability meant it missed out on a shot at Le Mans.

Ask anyone to think of a racing Ferrari, and the chances are that they will picture a 250 GTO, which was in its pomp nearly 60 years ago. That is the mark of the impact the car – and its looks – made.

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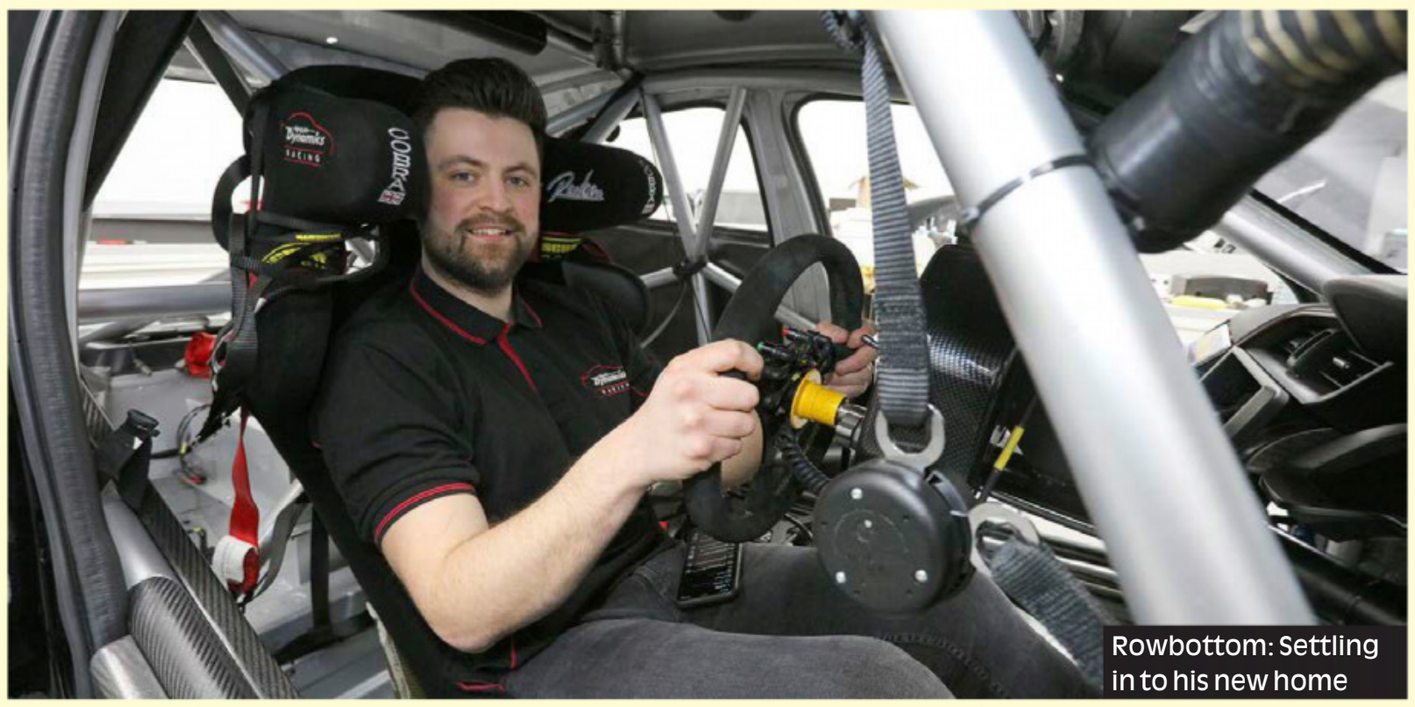
COLUMNIST

DANIEL ROWBOTTOM

The British touring car driver who is stepping into a Team Dynamics Honda for 2021

Photos: Motorsport Images



Rowbottom: Settling in to his new home

RoBo: Learning the craft in a Mercedes in 2019

So, the news is out: I will be a Team Dynamics driver this year for my return to the British Touring Car Championship. Talk about coming back with a bang! I have a fantastic opportunity this season and I plan to make the absolute most of it.

It was very difficult for me to step away from the BTCC in 2020. We were all guns blazing to contest the series with Ciceley Motorsport in the Mercedes, but I just had a feeling in my gut that it might not be the season we wanted to have.

That would certainly have been true in terms of spreading the message of my backers, Cataclean. All the dates just kept on getting pushed back and it soon became clear that we were going to be racing behind closed doors. The fan interaction is key for Cataclean and it got to the stage where that wasn't going to be possible in 2020. That engagement is a huge element for all of us, so we had a rethink.

It was a brave decision because we all know motorsport, and it is tough to step off the merry-go-round: you always want to be on it. But the decision was the right one for everyone concerned.

I was sat at home watching the BTCC and, when you see it on the TV with everyone out there giving it their all, I was thinking that I had maybe made a mistake. I was desperate to be out there. It was bloody uncomfortable.

Towards the end of last year, I had a phone call from Team Dynamics boss Matt Neal. He wanted to know what my situation was. He was asking if I was going to come back to the BTCC and we had a chat. Then things started to get serious.

I had been talking to other teams on the BTCC grid about a comeback in 2021, as every racing driver does, but there is a bigger picture to look at too. Not only are Cataclean my sponsors, they are personal friends too so any deal had to be right. Ultimately, it is not my money paying for my racing, it's theirs.

For an opportunity to put Cataclean in the same bed as their largest high street retailer, Halfords, just made absolute sense and it would have been stupid to dismiss it as a proposition. It was perfect for everyone concerned. When you add that commercial factor into the chance of me being able to drive a Team Dynamics Honda, it is a big win.

Stepping into a seat that has been occupied by three-time champion Matt Neal is a big responsibility. He is a motorsport legend, and I'm delighted that he is going to be in my corner as a mentor.

That was one of the things that was imperative when I signed up. Matt will be sat on my shoulder and always there for advice. I'll be able to tap in to his experience. He wants me to run at the front and be competitive, and I have a great resource to draw on.

I was interested to see what the reaction would be on social media. You are always going to get a certain amount of negativity because the BTCC is a very personal thing and the fans, who are fantastic people, have their favourites. I appreciate that a move like this is going to ruffle some feathers and I respect people who have the opinion that I shouldn't be there, but I am here to make the most of the opportunity I have been given.

I did read something saying that I was a bit rubbish in my first year in the BTCC in 2019, but the pure results don't show the progress we made and what we *did* manage to achieve. I scored five points in 30 races: I agree, it was a terrible return and the worst I have had in my racing career.

I think we had the most finishes just outside the points of any rookie ever – I wasn't tooling around at the back. Now, it is my job to prove to those people that are saying I shouldn't be there that they are wrong.

If you were to ask me what my goals are for the year, the answer would be to win the Jack Sears Trophy (for people who haven't been on the podium before). But, in every series I have been in, it is about outright results.

Now, I have no excuses. I am in a car that is capable of winning, I have Matt alongside me giving me pointers and my team-mate, Gordon Shedden, is probably one of the fastest BTCC drivers there has been in the last 10 years. I have to build on my experience and pace, but I am in no better place to do that. Bring on the start of the season.

Daniel Rowbottom will be part of the Team Dynamics challenge in the potent Honda Civic FK8 for '21

"I have a huge responsibility. I know I am in the seat of a BTCC legend"

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COLUMNIST

ALEX FORES

The young charger adapted from club racing to BRDC F3 in no time, and now he wants more

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

Great leveller - Fores's wet pace was pleasing

Fores says his club racing background helps him

As recently as 2019 I never thought we would get to where we got last year, racing in BRDC British Formula 3, because my whole background's been really 'clubbie'. In 2019 and before I raced in Monoposto and I have also raced in the Junior Saloon Car Championship and Formula Ford. British F3 was a dream come true.

British F3 is such a competitive championship and we were in the mix, especially at Snetterton in the wet – a big leveller – where I qualified 11th and ninth with minimal experience in the car.

You have to get the maximum out of everything in British F3 but I feel I learnt that quickly. In my first day in the car I was only three tenths off my team-mate who had been racing all season.

I always had aspirations in my club racing days but I never thought they were realistic, because I knew how big a factor money is. I was just doing as best as I could to make the most of the opportunities I had.

At the start of 2020 I stepped up to F3 Cup, which was really good and even that was a big step up from Monoposto F3 that I had been doing. And I'd only done one round of F3 Cup before my first British F3 race. They're both called F3 cars but are really different and I only had the Thursday and Friday testing to prepare. But I felt at home in British F3 and that it was the place I needed to be with all the up-and-coming drivers.

My British F3 and F3 Cup opportunities were with Chris Dittmann Racing. Our relationship with Chris started at 2019's final Monoposto F3 round at Brands Hatch. In the test day all the single-seaters were out and my Monoposto-spec Dallara was keeping up with a couple of the F3 Cup cars.

Then my dad suddenly got a text and it said 'we need to get your boy in a proper F3 car'. He didn't have the number saved so he replied 'sorry, who's this?' The reply was 'it's Chris, come down and chat'. F3 Cup was a natural progression and Chris was really willing for me to race for him. Then when F3 Cup was going well naturally we've then got our eye on British F3.

Dave Bromfield, of Bromfield Precision Engineering, has made everything happen for me. When I first moved into cars in the Junior Saloon Car Championship in 2014, when I was 14, Dave put in a bit towards the entry fees and then it ramped up in 2016 when he bought me a Zetec Formula Ford to compete in the Monoposto 1800 championship. He was backing me completely then and he's backed me all the way since. He's enjoyed the ride as much as me and it makes it more rewarding when we get good results because I'm repaying someone who's put their trust in me.

Chris Dittmann Racing "feels like home" to Fores

Dave was always a motorsport fan and when he helped with my entry fees he saw motorsport's 'behind the scenes' and that's when he got really hooked. One thing that underlines Dave's passion is when he bought me the Dallara Monoposto F3 car – we were of course over the moon – it meant his kitchen at his home, which had been ripped out, wasn't able to be finished! Me, my dad – who also raced – and Dave are a little team. Without them I wouldn't be where I am now.

I feel my club racing background has helped me in F3. I absolutely love racing and I appreciate everything I've got whereas I feel some of my rivals take it for granted a little bit. I like to think that I'm making the most of this opportunity every day. There's no huge pressure on me, and that's when people work their best. Plus a lot of my rivals have been competing at a high level, spending big money, and that only makes every result we get feel better as an underdog.

My adaptability is also strong because before Monoposto in 2019 I hadn't done a full season in anything, and when jumping into cars that handle completely differently I have to be quick because we've got minimal testing available due to budget.

Definitely I'd love to do more British F3 with Chris Dittmann this year, he can put out a competitive car every weekend and the team feels like home now. Funding, though, is the be all and end all of it.

Further ahead, I just take everything as it comes. I'd love to be a professional racing driver and I'm going do what I can to make that work but there's nothing set in stone, all the paths in racing are open. I would race whatever I get offered and whatever I can!

"My background means every result we get feels better as an underdog"

WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE

Senna was in majestic form at Interlagos

Thirty years ago yesterday we had one of Formula 1's most celebrated races. As it was one of the mighty Ayrton Senna's most ethereal drives. The 1991 Brazilian Grand Prix.

And fortunately, thanks to F1's channel, we can watch it with a hearty almost-hour of action. This is because, a couple of years back, it topped a fans' vote for a classic race to stream online to celebrate the championship's 1000-race anniversary. It's at: youtube.com/watch?v=pQE-0nG2kYE or via searching 'Brazil 1991 Extended Highlights | Race 1000'

To set the scene, Senna was in his eighth F1 season, had won two titles, yet somehow victory in front of his home hordes – with whom his connection was absolute – had eluded him every time.

This time though surely the win would arrive. A lengthy battle for first with Nigel Mansell's Williams got resolved his way when his foe first punctured then had his gearbox fail. Senna was 40 seconds clear of Mansell's second-placed team-mate Riccardo Patrese with just 11 laps left. Nothing could go wrong, could it? Well, it transpired, plenty could…

It's also a great opportunity to hear the recently departed Murray Walker in his commentary pomp, and in his legendary chalk-and-cheese partnership with James Hunt.

Graham Keilloh

TV GUIDE

Hallelujah, the Formula 1 season is upon us. Officially. As it's the season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix this weekend. And with it comes the familiar suite of TV coverage. In addition to Sky's live broadcast of all F1 sessions (and of Formula 2's), there are Channel 4's highlights: qualifying on Saturday evening (1830hrs-2000hrs) and the race a day later (1930hrs-2200hrs).

Sky also has its usual offerings around its live action. There's a weekend preview F1 Show today (Thursday) on Sky Sports F1 at 1700hrs-1800hrs, that's also repeated at various points later today and tomorrow morning. Plus there are Ted Kravitz's famous Notebooks: the post-quali version is shown on Sunday ahead of the race (Sky Sports F1, 1400hrs-1430hrs) and Kravitz's post-race effort is, appropriately, after the race (Sky Sports F1, 1900hrs-1930hrs).

And if you missed last weekend's V8 Supercars Sandown triple-header there are highlights tomorrow (Friday) on BT Sport 3, with its opening race shown at 1530hrs-1630hrs and the other two at 1630hrs-1730hrs. If that time's not convenient then it's all broadcast again twice over on

Sparks will fly in Formula 1

Saturday (BT Sport 3, 0600hrs-0700hrs and 0700hrs-0800hrs, then 1415hrs-1515hrs and 1515hrs-1615hrs) and twice more on Monday (BT Sport 2, 0200hrs-0300hrs and 0300hrs-0400hrs; BT Sport 1 0730hrs-0830hrs and 0830hrs-0930hrs).

Graham Keilloh

LIVE TV

Formula 1
Bahrain Grand Prix

- **Practice 1**: Friday, 1100hrs-1245hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Practice 2:** Friday, 1445hrs-1630hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Practice 3:** Saturday, 1145hrs-1310hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Qualifying,** Saturday, 1400hrs-1630hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Race:** Sunday, 1430hrs-1900hrs (Race start time 1600hrs), Sky Sports F1

Formula 2, Bahrain

- **Practice:** Friday, 1000hrs-1100hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Qualifying:** Friday, 1345hrs-1425hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Sprint Race 1:** Saturday, 1015hrs-1120hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Sprint Race 2:** Saturday, 1630hrs-1735hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Feature Race:** 1140hrs-1300hrs, Sky Sports F1

NASCAR
Bristol Dirt Race

- **Race:** Sunday, 2000hrs-0000hrs, Premier Sports 2

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Photographs must be of a good quality and please send no more than three images

ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!

Ian Baxendale's shot in the pits of National Hot Rod legend George Polley's Ford Anglia

Neil Ormston's classic shot from Le Mans

Close-quarter action at Druids, from Gary Hill

Porsches at Snetterton, from Robert Taylor

Rich Cranston reflects on Murray Walker

An evening evocative start, by David Harbey

NEXT WEEK — OUT THURSDAY, APRIL 1

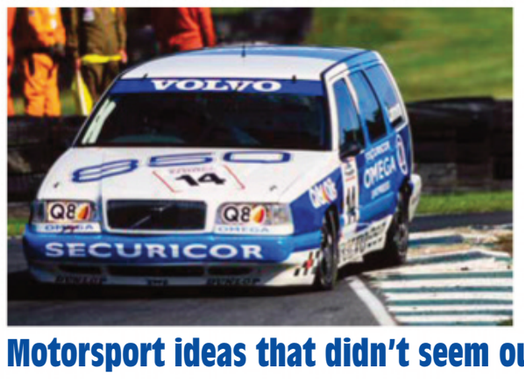
*Correct at time of going to press

READERS' Q&A

BEN EDWARDS

We pose the questions to the man behind the microphone

WAS IT ACTUALLY A JOKE?



Motorsport ideas that didn't seem out of place as an April Fools prank

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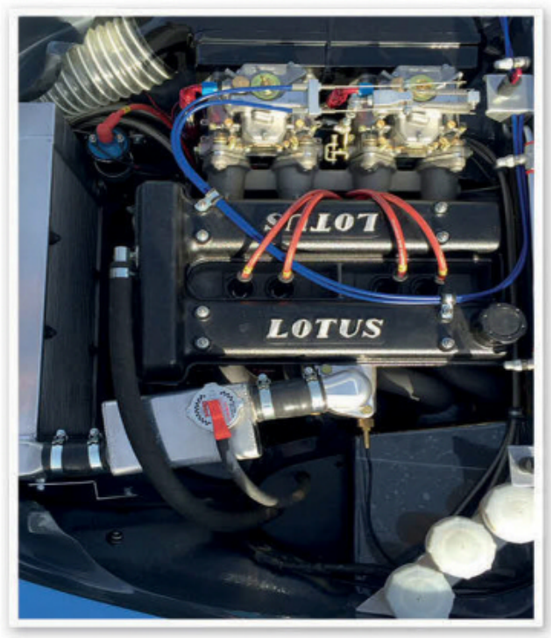

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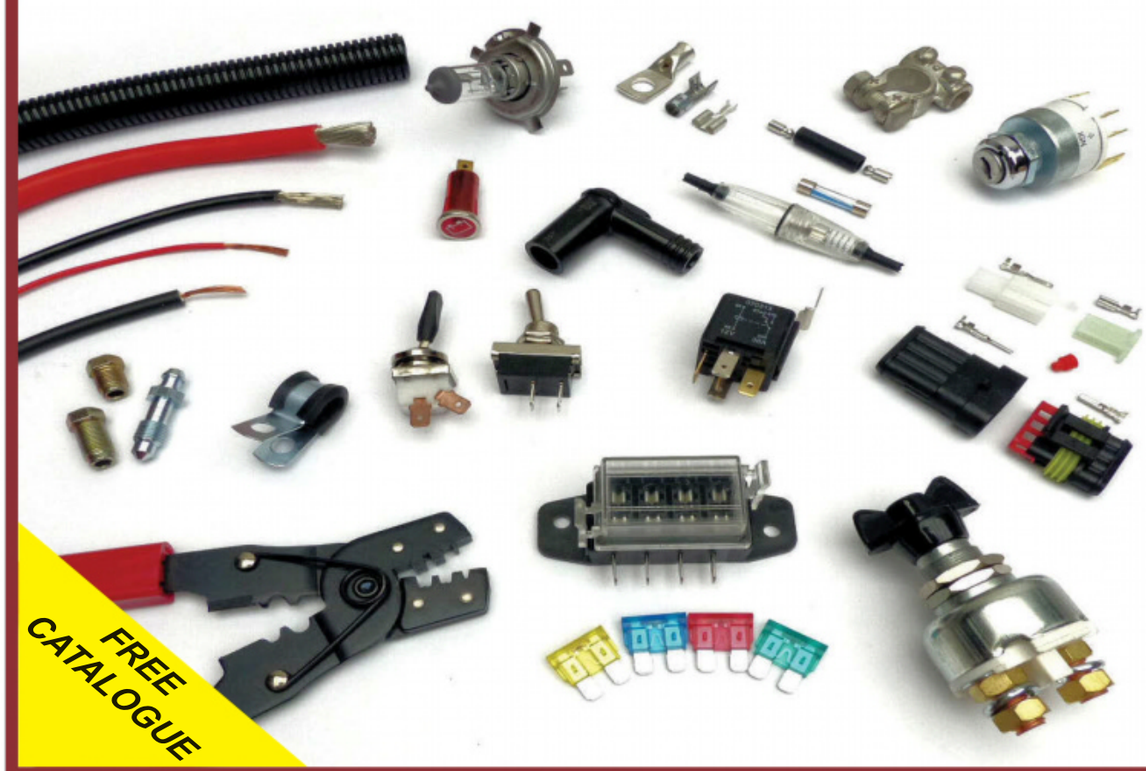

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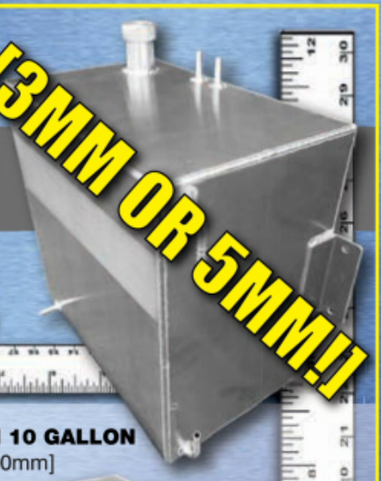

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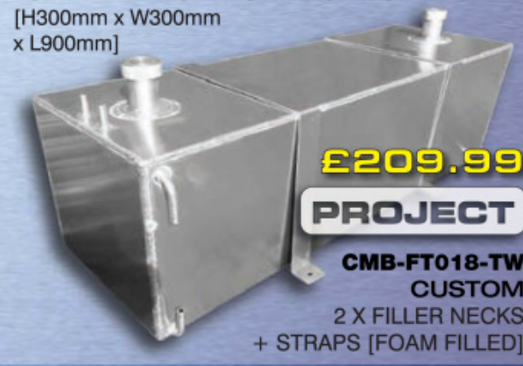

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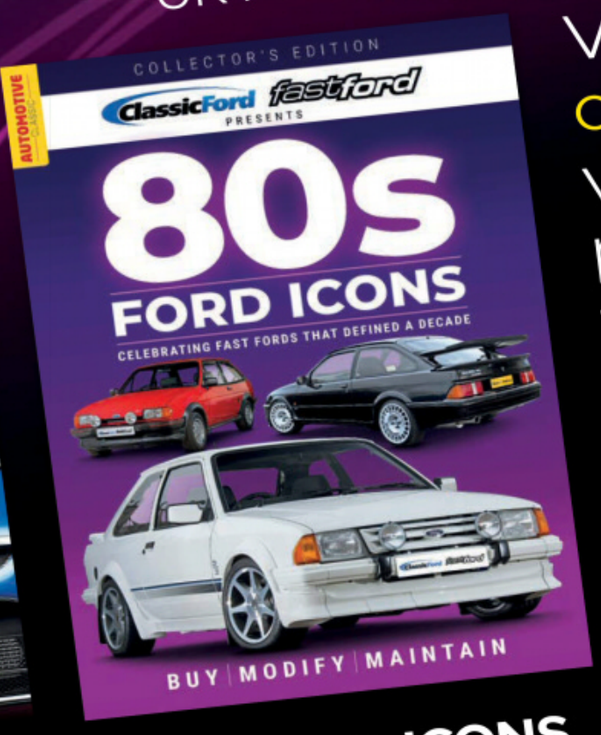

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